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BEDE'S
ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

GIDLEY.

BEDE'S
ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY
OF THE
ENGLISH NATION.

A NEW TRANSLATION

BY

THE REV. L. GIDLEY, M.A.,

CHAPLAIN OF ST. NICHOLAS', SALISBURY.



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INTRODUCTION.

THE ecclesiastical history of the Angles has been comparatively neglected by the mass of English Churchmen ; probably from the suspicion and mistrust with which it has been viewed, as containing a large amount of the leaven of Romanism. While the Church of Rome faithfully maintained the essential doctrines of the Christian faith, she nevertheless taught her Anglo-Saxon converts that many things were to be believed which were warranted neither by apostolic tradition, nor yet by Holy Scripture. Bede's History is very instructive as showing what the nature of the grounds were on which these new doctrines rested. They were chiefly visions ; and, according to the importance which is attached to these as an evidence of the Divine will, so must these peculiar doctrines stand or fall. Granting, however, that our Angle forefathers professed a form of Christianity tinged with superstition at the source from which they received it, we shall still find a large *residuum* of sincere faith and devotion, as exemplified by such men as Cuthbert and Bede himself ; nor does it seem easy to assign a valid reason why the scepticism of the adult age of a nation should be preferred to the credulity of its infancy.

English civil history of the Anglo-Saxon period has also been treated by many of our historians with comparative

neglect. One of them quotes a passage from Milton, in order to prove the unimportance of the early records of our ancestors¹. In order to show how unfairly this passage has been cited by him, I give it at length. 'The same day Ethelmund, at Kinneresford, passing over with the Worcestershire men, was met by Weolstan, another nobleman, with those of Wiltshire, between whom happened a great fray, wherein the Wiltshire men overcame, but both dukes were slain², *no reason of their quarrel written*; such bickerings to recount, met often in these our writers, what more worth is it than to chronicle the wars of kites or crows, flocking and fighting in the air³?' It is evident that Milton here finds fault rather with the chronicler than with his subject. This is further evident from his frequent invectives against the *style* of the monastic writers. Certainly, he would not have taken the trouble to compile a history of Anglo-Saxon times from these sources, if he had thought the events themselves as insignificant as some have affected to consider them.

Little is known respecting the life of Bede, beyond the few particulars which he himself gives us at the end of his History. As it appears that he was writing his History in A.D. 731, and was then in his fifty-ninth year, he must have been born in A.D. 672 or 673. There is an anecdote related

¹ 'Milton has said that these conflicts are as undeserving of notice as "the wars of kites or crows, flocking and fighting in the air," and this remark certainly holds good with respect to the general reader, though it may not apply with equal force to the philosopher or the antiquary.' Keightley, *Hist. of England*, vol. i. p. 15.

² His authority here is the Saxon Chronicle on the year 800.

³ Milton, *History of England*, Bk. iv. p. 184.

of him by Alcuin, who, writing to the monks of St. Peter's, Jarrow, says: 'The visitations of angels are undoubtedly frequent at holy places. For it is related that Bede, our master and your blessed patron, said, "I feel sure that angels visit the congregations of the brethren at the canonical hours. What if they find me not there among the brethren? Must they not say, Where is Bede? why comes he not with the brethren to the appointed services¹?"'

Bede's death, which took place in A.D. 735, is described in a letter written by his disciple Cuthbert, of which the following is a translation:—

'To his dearly-beloved fellow-reader in Christ, Cuthbert², his co-disciple, eternal health in God.

'I received with much pleasure the little present that you sent, and read with great satisfaction your letter full of devout erudition, in which I found what I chiefly desired, that holy masses were performed and prayers offered up diligently by you for Bede, our father and master, beloved by God. Wherefore I take the more pleasure, for the love that I bore him (as far as my ability extends) to say in few words in what manner he departed from this world, since I understood that you had desired and requested this.

'He was, indeed, burdened with a very great attack of

¹ Alcuin Epp. 16, ad fratres ecclesie S. Petri. 'Sed et angelorum visitationes loca sancta frequentare non dubium est. Fertur enim magistram nostrum et vestrum patronum beatum dixisse Bedam, "Scio Angelos visitare canonicas horas et congregationes fraternas: quid si ibi me non invenerint inter fratres? Nonne dicere habent, Ubi est Beda? Quare non venit ad adorationes statutas cum fratribus?"' (Moberly.)

² Cuthbert, the writer of this epistle, succeeded Huaetberht as abbot of Jarrow.

shortness of breath, but without pain, before the day of the Lord's resurrection, that is, for about a fortnight; and then afterwards, being glad and rejoicing, he passed his life giving thanks to omnipotent God every day and night—yea, every hour—until the day of the Lord's ascension, that is, the seventh day before the Kalends of June¹, and gave us his disciples every day lectures, and employed the rest of the day in the chanting of psalms; he passed the whole night also wakeful in joyfulness and thanksgiving, unless only a short sleep interrupted him: as soon, however, as he awoke he resumed his wonted practice, and, with his hands spread out, ceased not to give thanks to God. O truly blessed man! He sang that saying of the blessed apostle Paul, "It is dreadful to fall into the hands of the living God!" and many other things out of Holy Scripture, and in our language also, since he was well acquainted with our verses; saying, concerning the awful departure of the soul from the body,—

"Fore the neid faerae
 Naenig uuiurthit
 Thonc snotturra
 Than him tharf sie
 To ymbhycgannae
 Aer his hin-iongae
 Huaet his gastae
 Godaes aeththa yflaes
 Aefter deoth-daege
 Doemid uuieorthae."

'Of which this is the meaning:—"Before the appointed end, no one can be more careful than is needful in taking thought, to wit, before the soul departs hence, as to what it

¹ May 26.

hath done of good or evil ; and how it is to be judged after death."

'He sang also antiphons, according to our custom and his own, one of which is, "O glorious King, Lord of virtues, who in triumph to-day ascendedst above all the heavens, leave us not destitute, but send unto us the promise of the Father, the Spirit of Truth. Alleluia!" And when he came to those words, "leave us not destitute," he burst into tears, and wept much, and an hour after he began to repeat what he had already said ; and we, on hearing it, lamented with him. One while we read, another while we lamented—yea, we even wept while we read. In such cheer we passed the forty days, until the aforesaid day, and he rejoiced greatly, and gave God thanks that he had been worthy to be so afflicted. He quoted and often said, "God scourgeth every son whom he receiveth," and many other things out of Holy Scripture ; also the saying of St. Ambrose, "I have not so lived as to be ashamed to live among you ; but yet I do not fear to die, because we have a God who is good."

'Moreover, on these days, he laboured in the composition of two works very worthy of mention (besides the lectures which he gave us, and the chanting of psalms), that is to say, he translated the Gospel of St. John into our tongue, for the benefit of the Church, and certain extracts from the books of the *Wheels* of Bishop Isidore, saying, "I would not that my children should read what is false, and, after my death, spend their labour upon this without profit." But when the third day of the week before the Lord's ascension was come, he began to be greatly distressed in his breathing, and some degree of swelling appeared in his feet ; but,

during the whole of that day, he taught and cheerfully dictated, and, among other things, said, "Learn with speed; I know not how long I may last, nor how soon my Maker may take me away." Moreover, he seemed to us to be well aware of his end; and so he passed the night wakeful in thanksgiving.

'And on the shining of the morn, that is, at the fourth hour, he diligently charged us to write what we had begun; and this was done unto the third hour. But from the third hour we walked in procession, with the reliques of the saints, as the custom of that day demanded. There was, however, one of us with him, who said to him, "Most beloved master, there is yet one chapter wanting, and it seems to be troubling you to ask you more." Then he said, "It is no trouble. Take your pen, and mend¹ it, and write quickly." And he did so. Moreover, at the ninth hour he said to me, "I have some things of value in my chest—that is, pepper, napkins², and incense; but run quickly and bring the priests of our monastery to me, that I also may distribute to them such gifts as God has given me. The rich indeed of this world aim at giving gold, silver, and whatsoever else is precious, but I will give with much charity and joy to my brethren what God hath given me." And this I did, with fear and in haste. And he addressed each one, admonishing and entreating them to say masses and prayers for him, which they readily promised to do.

¹ tempera. So the Italian 'temperare una penna,' and 'temperatojo,' a penknife.

² Oraria. Casaub. ad Vopisc. Aurel. 48. extr. docet, fuisse linteum oblongum et latum: cujusmodi vocant Ecclesiastici scriptores, quod sinistro sacerdotis imponitur. Facc. Lexicon.

‘Moreover, all bewailed and wept, chiefly because he had said that they should see his face no more in this world; but they rejoiced in that he said, “It is time that I should return to Him who made me, who created me, who formed me out of nothing. I have lived a long time. The good Judge hath well ordained my life for me. The time of my departure is at hand, because I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ.” These and many other things he spoke, and passed the day in cheerfulness until the evening. And the aforesaid boy said, “Most beloved master, one sentence is still unwritten.” Then he said, “Write it quickly.” After a little while the boy said, “The sentence is now written.” Then he said, “It is well. You have spoken the truth. It is finished. Take my head in your hands, because I have great delight in sitting opposite my holy place, in which I was wont to pray, in order that I also sitting may be able to call upon my Father.” And then on the pavement of his cell, while he was singing “Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,” he breathed forth his last breath from his body, and so departed to the heavenly kingdom.

‘Moreover, all who heard or saw the decease of the blessed father, said that they had never seen any other make an end of life in so great devotion and tranquillity. Since, as you have heard, as long as his soul was in his body, he ceased not to sing Glory to the Father and certain other spiritual things, and, with his hands spread out, to give thanks to the living and true God. Know, however, dearest brother, that I could relate many things concerning him, but that my unskilfulness in language makes my discourse short.’

Bede was buried at Jarrow, and the following epitaph was inscribed on his tomb:—

‘Presbyter hic Beda requiescit carne sepultus:
Dona, Christe, animam in cœlis gaudere per ævum.
Daque illi sophiæ debriari fonte, cui jam
Suspiravit ovans intento semper amore.’

TO THE MOST GLORIOUS KING

CEOLWULPH¹

BEDE THE SERVANT OF CHRIST, AND PRESBYTER.

I SENT with much pleasure before this, O king, at your desire, the Ecclesiastical History of the nation of the Angles², which I had lately published, for you to read and judge of, and I now send it again to be transcribed and more fully studied, as you shall find time : and I delight greatly in the zeal of your sincerity, through which you not only earnestly apply your ear to the hearing of the words of Holy Scripture, but also take diligent pains to become acquainted with the actions and words of illustrious men of former times, and especially of our nation. For if history relates good things concerning the good, the attentive hearer is excited to imitate that which is good ; or if it reports evil things concerning the depraved, the religious and pious hearer is no whit the less incited, while he shuns that which is harmful and perverse, himself to follow more diligently the things which he knows are good and worthy of God. You also discerning by your great vigilance this very thing, are

¹ See Bk. V. Chap. xxiii.

² In Chap. xv. Bede has, 'Anglorum sive Saxonum gens,' and in Chap. xxii., 'Genti Saxonum sive Anglorum,' as if the two names were indiffer-ent. Bede himself was an Angle, and the Angles, in his time, were the more prominent tribe of the two.

desirous that the aforesaid History should become more fully known to yourself, as well as to those whom Divine authority has appointed you to govern.

Moreover, in order that, in regard to what I have written, I may remove all occasion of doubt either from yourself or from the other hearers or readers of this History, I will take care briefly to state from what authors I have chiefly learnt these things. Before all, Abbot Albinus¹, a man most reverend and in all respects most learned, was my adviser and helper in this work; who, in the Church of the Cantuarii, being instructed by those venerable and most learned men, Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, and Abbot Hadrian, had diligently gained information, either from the records of letters, or from the tradition of the elders, of all things which in the province of the Cantuarii, or even in the regions adjoining the same, were done by the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory; and what of these things appeared to him worthy of remembrance, he transmitted to me by Nothelm², a religious presbyter of the Church of London, either in writing, or to be reported orally by Nothelm himself. This Nothelm, to wit, going afterwards to Rome, and searching the archives of the same holy Roman Church, by the permission of the pontiff Gregory³ who now presides over that Church, found some

¹ Abbot of the monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul, at Canterbury. A letter addressed by Bede to him, in gratitude for his help towards this History, is given by Mabillon, *Vetera Analecta*, i. 9.

² Succeeded Tatwin as archbishop of Canterbury, A.D. 735.

³ Some suppose Gregory III, who became pope March 18, A.D. 731. Or, more probably, Gregory II, who became pope May 19, A.D. 715; and before his accession to the papal see, was librarian to the Church of Rome.

epistles there of the blessed Pope Gregory, and on his return brought them to me to be inserted in my History, by the advice of the aforesaid most reverend father Albinus. From the beginning then of this volume unto the time when the nation of the Angles received the faith of Christ, I have gained my information about my subject chiefly from the writings of our predecessors, collected from various parts. But after that, unto the present times, I have gained intelligence, as I said, of what was done in the Church of the Cantuarii by the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory, or their successors, and under what kings, by the zeal of the aforesaid Abbot Albinus ; Nothelm, as I said, reporting it to me. They also gave me some particulars relating to the provinces of the East and West Saxons, as well as to those of the East Angles and Northumbrians, by what prelates, or in the time of what kings, they received the grace of the Gospel. In short, I was incited to venture to undertake this work chiefly by the advice of Albinus himself. Moreover, Danihel¹, the most reverend bishop of the West Saxons, who is still living, declared to me, in writing, some things concerning the ecclesiastical history of that province, and also of the province of the South Saxons adjoining it, and of the Isle of Wight. But how, by the ministry of Ceddi and Ceadda, religious priests of Christ, either the province of the Mercians came to the faith of Christ, of which it was ignorant, or how the province of the East Saxons regained the faith which it had previously expelled, and what the lives and deaths were of those fathers themselves, I have carefully gained information from the brothers of the monas-

¹ See Bk. V. Chap. xviii.

tery built by them, and called Læstingaeu¹. Moreover, I have learnt, partly from the writings or tradition of our ancestors, partly from the relation of the most reverend Abbot Esus, what took place with regard to the Church in the province of the East Angles. But what took place with regard to the faith of Christ, and what the sacerdotal succession was in the province of Lindissis, I learnt either from the letters of the most reverend prelate Cyniberct², or by the oral relation of other faithful men. But of what was done in the Church through the different regions in the province of the Northumbrians, from the time that they received the faith of Christ unto the present, I was able to gain intelligence not from one author only, but from the faithful assertion of innumerable witnesses, who could know or remember these things; besides those things which I could know by myself. Among which, it is to be observed, that as to what I have written, either in this volume, or in the Book of his acts, respecting the most holy father and prelate Cudberct, I partly copied from what I found written before concerning him by the brothers of the Church of Lindisfarne, giving entire credit to the history which I read; and partly took care to add discreetly those things which I was able to learn by myself from the most sure testimony of faithful men. And I humbly entreat the reader, that if anywhere in this that I have written he finds any things set down otherwise than as the truth is, he will not impute this to me, since, according to the true rule of history, I have simply aimed at committing to writing, for the instruction

¹ See Bk. V. Chap. xxiii.

² See Bk. IV. Chap. xii.; Bk. V. Chap. xxiii.

of posterity, such things as I collected from common report.

Furthermore ¹, I humbly entreat all hearers or readers of our nation, to whom this same History may come, to remember often to intercede with the Divine mercy for my infirmities both of mind and body; and let them each in their respective provinces make me this return, as a remuneration on their part, that, since I have diligently taken care to set down, concerning the several provinces or the more important places, such things as I thought were worthy of mention and pleasing to the inhabitants, I may find among all of them the fruit of their pious intercession.

¹ This last paragraph is placed by nearly every MS. at the end of the History.

BEDE'S ENGLISH CHURCH HISTORY.

B O O K I.

CHAPTER I.

Respecting the situation of Britain and Ireland, and their first inhabitants.

BRITAIN, an island of the ocean¹, the name of which was formerly Albion, is situated between north and west, opposite to Germany, France, and Spain, the largest portions of Europe, at a considerable interval. It is eight hundred miles in length northward, and two hundred miles in breadth, with the exception only of the more extended tracts of various promontories, by which its circuit is made full 4,875 miles². It has on the south Belgic Gaul, to the nearest shores of which a town called Rutubi Portus³, now corruptly named by the English people Reptacæstir, affords passage; the sea between, from Gessoriacum⁴, of the tribe of the Morini⁵, which is the nearest shore, being fifty miles across, or as some have written⁶, 450 stadia⁷. At

¹ i.e. Not of an inland sea.

² Solinus, Polyhistor, xxii.

³ Richborough.

⁴ Boulogne.

⁵ 'Extremique hominum Morini, Rhenusque bicornis.' Virg. *Æn.* viii. 227.

⁶ e.g. Dio Cassius (*Hist.* xxxix. 50) and Antoninus.

⁷ About fifty-six miles.

the back, where it lies open to boundless ocean, it has the Orcades isles¹. The island is rich in the fruits of the earth and in trees, and is suited for the nourishment of cattle and beasts of burden; in some places even sprouting with vineyards. It is also productive of various kinds of both land and water fowl. It is remarkable also for rivers very full of fish, and for copious springs, and particularly abounds in pike and eels. Seals also are very frequently taken, and dolphins, and even whales, besides various kinds of shell-fish, among which are mussels², inclosed in which they often find pearls, the best too of every colour, that is, red, and purple, and violet, and green; but mostly white. There are also whelks in great abundance, from which a scarlet-coloured dye is made, the most beautiful red of which cannot be worn out by any exposure to the heat of the sun or violence of rain, but the older it is so much the more rich it becomes. Britain has also both salt springs and hot springs; and from them streams which supply warm baths accommodated to every age and each sex, in distinct places, according to the requirement of each. For water (as says St. Basil³) receives the quality of heat when it runs through some particular beds of minerals, and becomes not only warm but even boiling. It is rich in veins of metals, brass, iron, lead, and silver; and also produces jet in great plenty and of excellent quality. This stone is

¹ The Orkney Islands.

² The *Mya Margaritifera*, a large black mussel, found in the Scotch rivers, and *Mya Anodonta Cygnea*, found in English rivers.

³ St. Basil, Hexamer. Hom. iv. Ἦδη δὲ καὶ θερμότερας ἐκ μετάλλων ποιότητος κατὰ τὴν διέξοδον προσλαβοῦσα ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς τοῦ κινουῦντος αἰτίας ζέουσα γίνεται, ὥς τὰ πολλά, καὶ πυρώδης.

black and shining, and burns when applied to fire; when burnt it drives away serpents; when warmed by attrition, it holds fast, as much as amber does, those things which are put to it. This island was anciently remarkable for twenty-eight towns of great note, besides innumerable castles, which were furnished with very firm walls, towers, gates, and bars¹.

And because it lies almost under the very north pole of the world, it has bright nights in the summer, so that often at midnight it is a matter of doubt to the beholders whether the evening twilight yet remains or the dawn of morning has already arrived, since the sun during the night goes not far beneath the earth on its return to the east through the regions of the north: whence also it has days of great length in summer, and, on the contrary, nights of great length in winter, that is, of eighteen hours' length, by reason of the sun then departing into the regions of the south. It has very short nights in the summer, and very short days in the winter, that is, of only six equinoctial hours; whereas in Armenia, Macedonia, and Italy, and other regions of the same latitude, the longest day or night is fifteen hours, the shortest full nine.

This island at present, according to the number of the books in which the Divine Law was written, examines and confesses one and the same science of truth and true sublimity, in the languages of five nations, that is, of the Angli, the Britons, the Scots, the Picts and the Latins. The Latin tongue, by the study of the Scriptures, is become common to all the rest. At first the Britons were the only

¹ Deut. iii. 5.

inhabitants of this island, from whom it received its name : they, sailing to Britain from the country of Armorica¹, as it is said, appropriated to themselves its southern parts.

And when, commencing from the south, they had gained possession of the greatest part of the island, it chanced that the nation of Picts from Scythia², as they say, having put to sea in a few long ships, reached Ireland³ by reason of the veering of the gales, beyond all the limits of Britain, and entered upon its northern coasts ; and having found there the nation of Scots, asked for themselves also habitations in parts of it, and were not able to obtain their request. Now Ireland is the largest of all the islands next to Britain, being situate towards the west of Britain ; and as towards the north it is shorter than it, so towards the south it extends itself very much beyond the boundaries of Britain, until it reaches over against the northern parts of Spain, although with a great interval of water between. To this island, then, the Picts, coming in ships, as I said, requested that a place of settlement should be given to them in it. The Scots answered that the island would not hold them both, but, 'we can give you,' they said, 'good advice as to what you may do. We know of another island not far from ours, towards sunrise, which often in clear days we are wont to behold afar off. If you are willing to go to it, you are able to find a habitation there ; and if any offer opposition, use us as allies.' Therefore the Picts, making sail for Britain,

¹ Brittany.

² By 'Scythia' Bede probably means Scandinavia.

³ In the Saxon version, 'Hibernia' is rendered 'Scotland.' The Pictish dynasty prevailed in Scotland from the abdication of the Romans, A.D. 446, to the overthrow of Wred by Kenneth, A.D. 843.

began to dwell along the northern parts of the island, for the Britons had occupied the southern. And when the Picts, not having wives, sought them from the Scots, they consented to give them on this condition only—that when the matter became a subject of doubt, they should choose their king rather from the female than the male line of royalty: which custom even to the present time is, as is well known, observed among the Picts¹.

But in the course of time Britain received, after the Picts and Britons, a third nation, the Scots, in the part occupied by the Picts², who, with Reuda for their leader, having set out from Ireland, obtained for themselves, whether by friendship or by the sword, those settlements among them which up to the present they hold³; from

¹ The Cymri, Scots, and Picts, were most probably branches of the great Celtic family. Their languages, as Bede testifies, were different, or at least very different dialects of the same language. The Cymri were probably connected with the Cimbri, who inhabited the Cimbric Chersonese (Jutland), and who were, perhaps, the Cimmerii of Homer. The Scots, who are called *Scit* in their own, i. e. the Irish language, were probably of Scythian origin. The *Bolgæ* or *Firbolgæ* of Ireland are believed to have been *Belgæ*, and appear to have come from South Britain. The Picts, however, are said by some writers to have been a Gothic tribe, and to have come from Germany. They were so called by the Romans, from their practice of painting their bodies. In the early Irish annals they are named *Cruitbneachb*. The word *Gael* is akin to *Galli*, the name given by the Romans to the Celtæ of Gaul.

² Nennius says that the Picts had possession of the Orkneys and the northernmost parts of Great Britain (probably about A.C. 300) before the Scots came to Ireland. The annals of Tigernach relate that seven Pictish kings reigned in Ireland before A.D. 171.

³ This was not the first possession of the Scots in Caledonia. Cormac, king of Ireland, obtained possessions in Albany, probably about A.D. 240.

which leader, in truth, they are even unto this day called Dalreudini¹: for *dal*, in their tongue, signifies 'a part.' Ireland, both in its average breadth and in healthfulness, as well as in the serenity of its air, is much superior to Britain, so that snow there rarely remains longer than three days. No one for winter use either cuts hay in the summer or builds sheds for beasts of burden; no reptile is wont to be seen, no serpent is able to live there; for often serpents brought thither from Britain, on the ship approaching the shore, die, as if overcome with the scent of the air. Nay, more; almost all things brought from that island are efficacious against poison. In short, leaves of books brought from Ireland have been scraped, and the scrapings, when put in water and given to drink to persons bitten by a serpent, have been known to absorb and allay immediately the whole force of the venom working in such persons, and all the swelling of the body. The island abounds in milk and honey, nor is it destitute of vines, fishes, and birds; it is moreover noted for the hunting of stags and goats. This island is properly the country of the Scots, who having gone forth from it, as I have said, added a third nation in Britain to the Britons and the Picts. There is, moreover, a very great gulf of the sea that anciently separated the nation of Britons from the Picts, which on the west for a long space makes an inroad upon the land, where is a town

¹ Dalrieda, now Rout, whence they came, signifies 'the portion of King Eda.' *Righ*, *Rbwy*, or *Rby*, means 'king' in the Celtic language. This colony of Scots occupied Cantire, Knapdale, Lorn, Argyle, Breadalbane, and the adjacent islands. A colony was led from Dalrieda, in Antrim, by Fergus, son of Eric, A.D. 503.

of the Britons very strongly fortified even to this day, which is called Alcluith¹, to the northern part of which gulf then the Scots, whom I have spoken of, came and made for themselves a place of settlement.

CHAPTER II.

How Gaius Julius Cæsar was the first Roman that came to Britain².

THIS same Britain was unapproached by and unknown to the Romans until the time of Gaius Julius Cæsar, who, in the year from the building of the city 693³, and the year before the time of the Lord's incarnation 60, held the office of the consulate with Lucius Bibulus; and whilst he was carrying on war against the nations of the Germans and the Gauls, who were divided only by the river Rhine, he came as far as the Morini, whence is the nearest and shortest passage to Britain; and having prepared about eighty store-ships and oared transports, sails across to Britain, where, having been first weakened by a severe fight, and afterwards caught by an adverse storm, he lost the greatest part of his fleet and no small number of his soldiers, and nearly the whole of his cavalry. Having returned to Gaul, he put his legions into winter quarters, and ordered six hundred ships of each kind

¹ Dumbarton.

² The whole of this chapter is from Orosius, vi. 9.

³ The year of the consulate of Cæsar and Bibulus, not of Cæsar's first invasion of Britain, which took place A.D. 55.

to be built, with which he sailed again to Britain early in the spring; but whilst he proceeds with the army against the enemy, the ships standing at anchor, being caught by a storm, are either dashed against each other or driven upon the sands and broken to pieces: forty of them were destroyed—the rest, with great difficulty, were repaired. The cavalry of Cæsar in the first conflict was overcome by the Britons, and the tribune Labienus¹ killed. In the second battle, with great hazard to his own troops, he overcame and put to flight the Britons: thence he advanced to the river Tamesis². On the farther shore of this river, under the command of Cassobellaunus³, an immense multitude of the enemy had stationed themselves, and had fenced the bank of the river and nearly the whole of the ford under water with very sharp stakes, the remains of which stakes in that place⁴ are seen even at this day, and it appears to beholders that each of them, in measure as thick as a human thigh, and set in lead, is immovably fixed in the bottom of the river. When this was discovered and avoided by the Romans, the barbarians, not enduring the charge of the legions, hid themselves in woods, whence by frequent sallies they often and seriously annoyed the Romans. In the meantime the very strong city of Trinovantum, having given forty hostages to Cæsar, together with its leader Androgius⁵, surrendered itself; which example very many other cities followed, and made a league with the Romans. Acting on

¹ Not Labienus, but Q. Laberius Durus. Cæsar, De Bell. Gall. v. 15.
Bede copied this error from Orosius.

² The Thames.

³ Called by Cæsar, Cassivellaunus.

⁴ Now called Cowy Stakes.

⁵ Called by Cæsar, Mandubratius. De Bell. Gall. v. 20.

their information, Cæsar, after a severe contest, took Cassobellaunus' ¹ town ², which was situated between two marshes, and defended besides by a skirting of woods, and amply stored with everything. After this, Cæsar having returned into Gaul from Britain, when he had put the legions into winter quarters, was on every side surrounded and harassed by sudden tumults of wars.

CHAPTER III.

Claudius, the second Roman who came to Britain, added the Orcades isles to the Roman empire; and Vespasian, sent by him, subjected the isle Vecta also to the Romans ³.

IN the year from the building of the city 798 ⁴, the Emperor Claudius, the fourth from Augustus, desiring to show off himself as a prince serviceable to the state, sought for war everywhere and victory from any quarter. Therefore he undertook an expedition to Britain, which appeared excited to a tumult on account of some deserters not having been given up ⁵. He sailed across to the island, which no

¹ Cassobellaunus ruled over the counties of Hertford, Bedford, and Buckingham.

² Probably Verolamium, now St. Albans.

³ This chapter is from Orosius, vii. 6.

⁴ Claudius came to Britain A.D. 44.

⁵ Suetonius, Caligula xlv.: 'Nihil autem amplius quam Adminio, Cincobellini Britannorum regis filio, qui pulsus a patre cum exigua manu transfugerat, in deditionem recepto, quasi universa tradita insula, magnificas Romam litteras misit.' Orosius, vii. 5: 'Cumque ibi Minocynobellinum Britannorum regis filium, qui a patre pulsus, cum paucis oberrabat, in deditionem recepisset, deficiente belli materia, Romam rediit.'

one, either before Julius Cæsar or since him, had dared to approach; and there, without any battle or bloodshed, within a very few days he recovered, on terms of surrender, the greatest part of the island. He also added to the Roman empire the Orcades isles¹, which lie in the ocean beyond Britain; and having returned to Rome the sixth month after he set out, he gave his son the name of Britannicus. He finished this war in the fourth year of his government, which is the year from the Lord's incarnation 46, in which year there was a most grievous famine throughout Syria, which is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles as having been foretold by the prophet Agabus². Vespasian³, who was emperor after Nero, being sent to Britain by the same Claudius, brought also under the Roman sway the isle Vecta⁴, which is very nigh to Britain on the south, and is from east to west about thirty miles, from south to north twelve; being in its eastern parts six miles, in its western three miles distant by sea from the southern shore of Britain. Nero, on succeeding Claudius in the government, ventured upon no military movement whatever; wherefore, among other innumerable losses of the Roman empire, he nearly lost Britain, for two most noted towns⁵ in his reign were there captured and subverted.

¹ Tacitus asserts that Agricola was the first who subdued them. Agric. 10.

² Acts xi. 28.

³ Here Bede copies Suetonius, Vespas. 4.

⁴ Isle of Wight.

⁵ Camalodunum (now Maldon) and Verolamium, by the army of Queen Boadicea. The province was recovered by Suetonius Paulinus.

CHAPTER IV.

How Lucius, king of the Britons, sent a letter to Pope Eleutherus, requesting that he might be made a Christian.

IN the year from the Lord's incarnation 156¹, Marcus Antoninus Verus, the fourteenth from Augustus, undertook the government, together with Aurelius Commodus his brother²; in whose time, when Eleutherus³, a holy man, held the pontificate of the Roman Church, Lucius, king of the Britons, sent a letter to him requesting that by his mandate he might be made a Christian. He soon obtained the fulfilment of his pious demand, and the Britons received the faith, and kept it in quiet peace inviolate and entire, unto the times of the Prince Diocletian.

CHAPTER V.

How Severus divided by a rampart the part he had acquired of Britain from the rest.

IN the year from the Lord's incarnation 189⁴, Severus, by birth an African of Tripolis, from the town Leptis, obtained the government, the seventeenth from Augustus, and held it seventeen⁵ years. He being naturally cruel, and continually

¹ Orosius has U.C. 911, which corresponds with A.D. 161.

² The name of this emperor was L. Ceionius Ælius Commodus Verus Antoninus. He was mostly called Lucius Verus.

³ According to Pagi, Eleutherus became pope A.D. 170.

⁴ Eusebius, A.D. 193.

⁵ Eusebius and other chronologers, eighteen. Dio, seventeen years, eight months, and three days. Severus died February 4, A.D. 211.

harassed by many wars, governed the state with very great courage, but with very great difficulty. Having been victorious in the very severe civil wars which had befallen him, he is drawn to Britain by the defection of almost all the allies, where after having frequently waged great and grievous wars, he thought fit to divide the part of the island which he had regained—not by a wall, as some think, but by a rampart—from the other unconquered tribes. For indeed a wall is made of stones, but a rampart, by which camps are fortified for repelling the attack of enemies, is made of turfs cut from the earth, with which it is raised just like a wall, high above the ground, having a trench in front, from which the turfs have been taken, above which stakes made of very strong timbers are fixed. Severus, therefore, extended from sea to sea a great trench and a very strong rampart, strengthened by a close chain of forts upon it; and afterwards died by disease at the city of Eboracum¹. He left two sons, Bassianus and Geta, of whom Geta, being judged a public enemy by the state, was put to death. Bassianus, having taken the name of Antoninus, obtained the government.

CHAPTER VI.

Concerning the reign of Diocletianus, and how he persecuted the Christians².

IN the year of the Lord's incarnation 286, Diocletianus, the thirty-third emperor from Augustus, elected by the army,

¹ York.

² The whole of this chapter is from Orosius, vii. 25.

reigned twenty years, and created Maximianus, whose surname was Herculus, his colleague in the government. In whose time a certain Carausius, of very low extraction, but ready in planning and executing, being appointed to guard the shores of the ocean which at that time the Franks and Saxons infested, did more for damage than for profit to the republic, and by restoring no part of the booty which he took from the pirates to the lawful owners, but appropriating it solely to himself, gave rise to a suspicion that he permitted the enemy, by his intentional negligence, to ravage the borders. Wherefore, when orders were given by Maximianus that he should be put to death, he assumed the purple, and took possession of Britain, and having most bravely appropriated and held it for seven years, he was at last put to death by the treachery of his associate Alectus. Alectus afterwards held for three years the island of which he had deprived Carausius; but Asclepiodotus, the Prætorian Prefect, overcame him, and after ten years recovered Britain. In the meantime Diocletianus in the East, Maximianus Herculus in the West, for the tenth time since Nero, gave orders that the churches should be destroyed and the Christians persecuted and put to death: which persecution lasted longer and was more cruel than almost any that had been carried on before; for it was carried on incessantly for ten years by burning of churches, proscription of innocent persons, and slaughter of martyrs. In short, even Britain was exalted at that time by abundant glory of confession devoted to God.

CHAPTER VII.

The passion of St. Albanus and his companions, who shed their blood at that time for the Lord.

FORASMUCH as St. Albanus suffered during it, concerning whom the presbyter Fortunatus¹, in his 'Praise of Virgins,' when he makes mention of the blessed martyrs who came to the Lord from the whole world, says,

'Rich Britain noble Alban doth produce.'

This Albanus, in truth, being as yet a pagan, when the commands of perfidious princes were raging against the Christians, received and entertained a certain cleric² who was flying from his persecutors; and whilst he beheld him occupied with continual prayers and watchings by day and by night, being all at once regarded by the Divine grace, he began to emulate the example of his faith and piety, and having been gradually instructed by his salutary exhortations, he left the darkness of idolatry and became a Christian with his whole heart. And when the above-named cleric had lodged with him some days, it came to the ears of the impious prince, that a confessor of Christ, to whom the place of martyrdom had not as yet been assigned, lay hid with Albanus. Upon this he immediately ordered some soldiers to seek for him very diligently. And when they had come to the cottage of the martyr, forth-

¹ Fortunatus, De Laude Virg. viii. 4.

² Said by Geoffry of Monmouth and Giraldus to have been called Amphibalus.

with St. Albanus, instead of his guest and master, presents himself to the soldiers in his guest's dress, that is, having put on the cassock¹ which he wore, and was bound and carried before the judge.

It chanced moreover that at the time when Albanus was brought to him, the judge was standing by the altars and offering sacrifices to demons. And when he had seen Albanus, being presently inflamed with excessive anger, because he had presumed of his own accord to offer himself to the soldiers instead of the guest whom he had received, and to incur danger himself, he commanded him to be dragged to the images of the demons, by which he was standing, saying, 'Because you have preferred to conceal a rebel and a sacrilegious person rather than give him up to the soldiers, that the scorner of the gods might pay the penalty merited by his blasphemy, whatever punishments were due to him it is yours to undergo, if you attempt to flinch from the observances of our religion.' But St. Albanus, who had voluntarily declared to the persecutors of the faith that he was a Christian, in no wise feared the threats of the prince, but, girt with the arms of spiritual warfare, openly declared that he would not obey his commands. Then, said the judge, 'Of what family or kindred are you?' Albanus replied, 'What does it concern you of what stock I am sprung? But if you want to hear the truth of my religion, know that I am already a Christian, and am occupied in Christian duties.' The judge said, 'I ask your name; tell me it immediately.' Then, said he, 'I am called

¹ Concerning the finding of this vestment many ages after in the monastery of Ely, see Thomas Walsingham, p. 103, A.D. 1313.

Albanus by my parents, and always adore and worship the true and living God who created the universe.' Then the judge, filled with anger, said, 'If you wish to enjoy the happiness of eternal life, delay not to sacrifice to the great gods.' Albanus answered, 'These sacrifices which you offer to demons, are neither able to help their subjects nor gain fulfilment of the desires and wishes of the suppliants. Nay, more; whosoever shall have offered sacrifices to these images, shall receive the eternal punishments of hell for his reward.' The judge, on hearing this, being moved with excessive fury, ordered the holy confessor of God to be beaten by the torturers, thinking to weaken the constancy of his heart by blows, which he could not by the breath of words. But he, when he was subjected to the most severe tortures, bore them for the Lord's sake patiently and even joyfully. When the judge perceived that he could not be overcome by torments, or recalled from the observance of the Christian religion, he ordered him to be beheaded.

When he was being led forth to death, he came to a river which flowed with most rapid course between the wall of the town and the arena where he was to be executed, and saw there no small number of persons of either sex, of various conditions and ages, who, doubtless by Divine inspiration, were summoned to attend upon the most blessed confessor and martyr, and so occupied the bridge on the river that it was scarcely possible for him to cross over that evening. In short, almost all persons having gone forth, the judge, without attendance, had stopped in the city. Therefore, St. Albanus, in whom was an ardent devotedness of mind to come more speedily to martyrdom, approached the torrent,

and directing his eyes to heaven, the channel being forthwith dried up, he beheld the water retreat and give way to his footsteps. Which when, amongst others, the executioner who was about to behead him had seen, he hastened to him who had come to meet death at the appointed place¹, admonished, without doubt, by Divine inspiration, and having cast before him the sword which he held drawn, throws himself at his feet, desiring greatly that with the martyr, or instead of the martyr, whom he was ordered to execute, he himself might obtain leave to be executed. Whilst, therefore, he was made from a persecutor a colleague of the faith and truth, and there was a reasonable delay among the executioners, as the axe lay on the ground, the most reverend confessor of God, together with the crowd, ascended the hill, which, as the occasion required, with most becoming grace is pleasantly situated at about five hundred paces from the arena, embroidered, yea, clothed all over with various flowers of herbs, in which there is nothing suddenly steep, nothing precipitous, nothing abrupt; which sloping far and wide at the sides, nature makes smooth like a plain, rendering it forsooth long since worthy, for its natural appearance of loveliness, to be consecrated by the blood of the blessed martyr. On the top of this hill then, St. Albanus asked that water might be given him by God, and immediately, its course being checked, a perennial fountain sprang up before his feet, that all might recognise that the river also had paid obeisance to the martyr; for it could not have happened that the martyr would have sought water on the lofty top of the hill, when he had left none in the river, if this had not

¹ Holmhurst, or Holynhirst.

seemed to him opportune. And this river having performed its ministration, and having left a testimony of its service, returned, when its devotion was completed, to its natural course¹. This most courageous martyr then, having been beheaded, received the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him. But he who laid impious hands on pious necks was not permitted to rejoice over the dead, for his eyes fell down upon the ground at the same time as the blessed martyr's head. Then and there also that soldier was beheaded, who being before restrained by the beck of the Highest, refused to inflict the stroke on the holy confessor of God; concerning whom indeed it is manifest that, albeit he was not washed in the font of baptism, yet was he cleansed by the libation of his own blood, and made worthy to enter into the heavenly kingdom. Then the judge, deeply struck with so great a novelty of celestial wonders, commanded that the persecution should forthwith be stopped, beginning to honour the slaughter of the saints, by which he before thought that they could be made to cease from their devotion to the Christian faith. The blessed Albanus suffered, moreover, on the tenth day of the Kalends of July², near the city of Verolanium, which is now called by the English people Verlamacæstir or Vætlingacæstir³, where afterwards, on the return of the serenity of Christian times, a church of wonderful workmanship and worthy of his

¹ The Saxon version here adds: 'The place was somewhat about half a mile from the city wall, and from the stream which he had before passed over dry-foot.'

² June 22.

³ This name is probably of the same origin as that of the Roman road called Vætlingastræt.

martyrdom, was erected¹. In which place, forsooth, unto this day the healing of sick persons and the operation of frequent virtues ceases not to take place. At this time² Aaron and Julius, citizens of Legionum Urbs³, and very many others of both sexes, suffered in different places, who being racked with divers tortures and lacerated by unheard-of dismemberments, having finished their conflict, dismissed their souls to the joys of the city which is above.

CHAPTER VIII.

How, when this persecution ceased, the Church in Britain had some little peace up to the times of the Arian madness.

BUT⁴ when the whirlwind of persecution ceased, the faithful of Christ who had concealed themselves in the time of danger in woods and deserts, or in secret caves, having gone forth in public, restore the churches which had been levelled to the ground, lay the foundations of, build, and complete temples of the holy martyrs, and, as it were, display everywhere their conquering ensigns, celebrate holidays, and perform sacred rites with pure heart and mouth. And this peace remained in the churches of Christ which were in Britain until the times of the Arian madness, which,

¹ The monastery of St. Alban's was built by Offa, about A.D. 793. After being destroyed by the Danes, it was restored by Lanfranc, A.D. 1077.

² This concluding part of the chapter is taken from Gildas, 8.

³ Caerleon.

⁴ The first part of this chapter is taken from Gildas (12); the latter part from Orosius (vii. 25).

having corrupted the whole world, tainted with the poison of its error even this island so far removed beyond the rest of the world: and this path, as it were, of pestilence having been opened across the ocean, without delay all the corruption of every heresy poured itself into the island, ever delighting to hear something new, and holding fast nothing-certain. At this time Constantius, who, whilst Diocletianus was alive, ruled Gaul and Spain, a man of the greatest gentleness and urbanity, died in Britain. He left his son Constantinus, born of his concubine¹ Helena, governor of Gaul. Eutropius, however, writes that Constantinus, being created emperor in Britain, succeeded his father in the government, in whose time the Arian heresy arose, and was detected and condemned in the Council of Nicæa; nevertheless, as I have said, the destructive venom of its perfidiousness not only tainted the churches of the whole continent, but also those of the islands.

CHAPTER IX.

How, during the reign of Gratianus, Maximus, being created emperor in Britain, returned with a great army to Gaul.

IN the year from the Lord's incarnation 377, Gratianus, the fortieth from Augustus, after the death of Valens, held the government for six years, although he had reigned long before with his paternal uncle Valens, and his brother Valentinianus. When he saw the state of the republic

¹ Eutropius, x. 2, says, 'ex obscuriori matrimonio.' The Saxon version adds, that Constantine was born in Britain.

afflicted and almost ruined, he invested Theodosius, a Spaniard, with the purple, at Syrmium, by reason of the necessity of restoring the republic, and, at the same time, set him over the government of the East and of Thrace. At which time Maximus, a man strenuous indeed, and honest, and worthy to be emperor, had he not, contrary to the faith of his oath, elevated himself by tyranny, having been, almost against his will, created emperor by the army in Britain, passed over into Gaul. There he killed Gratianus Augustus¹, circumventing him by craft, when he was alarmed by the sudden attack, and was intending to pass over into Italy; and expelled² his brother Valentinianus Augustus from Italy. Valentinianus took refuge in the East, and having been received with paternal affection by Theodosius, was presently restored to the government; that is to say, when they had shut up within the walls of Aquileia, and taken, and killed the tyrant Maximus³.

CHAPTER X.

How, during Arcadius' reign, the Briton Pelagius raised impious wars against the grace of God.

IN the year from the Lord's incarnation 394, Arcadius, the son of Theodosius, with his brother Honorius, the forty-third from Augustus, undertook and held the government

¹ Gratianus was killed during the consulate of Merobaudes and Saturninus, A.D. 383.

² A.D. 387.

³ Maximus was killed, Aug. 27, A.D. 388, during the consulate of Theodosius II. and Cynegius. Socrat. Hist. v. 14.

for thirteen years. In whose time Pelagius¹, a Briton, dispersed far and wide the poison of his perfidy against the aid of grace from above, using Julianus of Campania for his colleague, whom long since the intemperate longing for his lost bishopric² was goading; to whom St. Augustine, as well as the rest of the orthodox fathers, replied with many thousands of Catholic opinions, yet were not able to correct their madness; but, what is more grievous, their madness being inveighed against, was more inclined to increase by contradicting, than be purged by favouring, the truth: which Prosper³ the Rhetorician well expresses in heroic verses, when he says:—

‘A writer ’gainst Augustine snakelike glides,
And in his breast a gnawing rancour hides.
Whoe’er induced this snakeling vile to lift
Its head from out its cavern’s darksome rift?
Either the sea-girt Britons it maintain,
Or else it battens on Campania’s plain.’

CHAPTER XI.

How, in the reign of Honorius, Gratianus and Constantine were created tyrants in Britain, and presently were slain; the former in Britain, the latter in Gaul.

IN the year from the Lord’s incarnation 407, when Honorius Augustus, the younger son of Theodosius, held the government, in the forty-fourth place from Augustus, two

¹ Pelagius’ British name is supposed to have been Morgan.

² He had been deprived of his bishopric by Pope Celestine.

³ p. 194, ed. Paris, 1711.

years¹ before the attack on Rome which was made by Alaric King of the Goths, when the tribes of the Alani, Suevi, Vandals, and many others with these, having crushed the Franks and crossed over the Hrenus², were raging through the whole of Gaul, Gratianus, a municipal, is created tyrant, and slain in Britain. In his place, Constantine is chosen from the dregs of the soldiery, on account of the hope of his name alone, without the merit of virtue; who immediately on entering upon the government, passed over into Gaul, where, being frequently imposed upon by the barbarians with uncertain treaties, he caused rather harm to the republic: whereupon, presently by the order of Honorius, Count Constantius, having gone with the army to Gaul, shut him up in the city of Arelas³, took, and killed him; and his son Constans, whom from a monk he had made Cæsar, was killed at Vienna by his own⁴ Count Gerontius. Rome was crushed moreover by the Goths in the year 1064⁵ from its being built, from which time the Romans ceased to rule in Britain, about 470 years after the time that Gaius Julius Cæsar came to that island. They dwelt⁶, however, within the rampart which I have related that Severus made across the island, on the southern side of it, as the towns, watch-towers, bridges, and roads there made certify unto this day; but the parts of Britain beyond, and those islands also which are beyond Britain, they possessed by right of sovereignty.

¹ Orosius, vii. 40. 42.

² The Rhine.

³ Arles.

⁴ i.e. Constantine's. Sozom. Hist. Eccles. ix. 13-15.

⁵ The Chronicon has 'anno conditionis ejus, 1164,' the correct date, A.D. 409.

⁶ 'Eardædon Bryttas,' 'the Britons dwelt.' Saxon version.

CHAPTER XII.¹

How the Britons, being ravaged by the Scots and Picts, sought help of the Romans, who coming a second time, made a rampart across the island; but this having been broken through immediately by the aforesaid enemies, they were depressed by still greater calamity.

FORTHWITH Britain, in the part of the Britons, being despoiled of all its armed soldiery, and all its military forces, and all its active and flourishing youth, which, led away by the rashness of tyrants, never again returned home, was as much exposed to plunder as if entirely ignorant of all warlike practice. Lastly, on a sudden, by the attacks of two exceedingly fierce transmarine nations—the Scots from the south, the Picts from the north—it is stupefied and groans for many years. I call, however, these nations transmarine, not because they were situated out of Britain, but because they were removed from the part of the Britons by two interjacent gulfs of the sea², which, one from the eastern, the other from the western sea, make a long and wide indentation in the land of Britain, although not far enough to reach each other. The eastern has in the midst of it the city of Giudi³; the western has above it, that is, on the right side of it, the city Alcluith, which, in their tongue, signifies, ‘the rock of the Cluith⁴,’ for it is near the river of that name. On

¹ Most of this chapter is from Gildas, xi–xvii. The description of the friths and wall is Bede's own.

² The friths of Forth and Clyde.

³ On Inch Keith.

⁴ The Clyde.

account then of the hostility of these nations, the Britons sending ambassadors to Rome with letters, implored help with tearful prayers, and promised continual subjection, provided that the impending enemy might be kept at a greater distance. And presently an armed legion is assigned to them, which when it had been transported to the island and had engaged with the enemy, overthrew a great multitude of them, and expelled the rest from the territory of their allies; and exhorted them whom they had freed from their most dire depression, to build in the meanwhile between the two seas, across the island, a wall, which by keeping off their enemies might be a defence to them; and so returned home with great triumph. But the islanders constructing the wall, which they had been bidden to erect, not so much with stones as with turfs, insomuch as they had no one capable of constructing so great a work, build it totally useless. They made it, however, between the two friths or gulfs of the sea, concerning which I have spoken, for very many miles, in order that where the defence of water was wanting, there by the defence of the wall they might protect their territory from the irruption of the enemy. Of which work there made—that is, a very broad and high wall—unto this day one may behold most clear traces. It commences, moreover, at about the space of two miles from the monastery of Abercurnig¹, towards the west, and the place which, in the language of the Picts, is called Peanfahel², but in the

¹ Probably, Aber-Carron-Ey, i.e. the island at the mouth of the Carron; now Abercorn.

² Apparently from the Welsh, *Pen y wâl*, or *Pen-gwâl*, ‘the head of the wall.’

tongue of the English, Penneltun¹, and extending towards the west, terminates near the city of Alcluith. But their former enemies, when they perceived that the Roman soldiery had departed, presently, being conveyed in ships, invade their borders, and cut down all things; and reap, tread under foot, pass over, as if ripe corn, everything in their way: whereupon ambassadors are sent again to Rome imploring with tearful invocation assistance, that their wretched country might not be utterly destroyed, and that the name of a Roman province, which had so long been renowned among them, should not become vile, being overwhelmed by the unprovoked attacks of foreign nations. Again a legion is sent, which, coming unlooked for in the time of autumn², made great havoc of the enemy, and drove across the seas³ all who were able to escape, who before were accustomed to collect booty and carry it across the sea every year, without any one to resist them. Then the Romans gave the Britons to understand that they could not any more, for their defence, be harassed with such laborious expeditions: they advise them rather to take arms themselves, and enter upon the task of contending with the enemy, who could not be braver than them for any other reason than that they themselves were relaxed by inactivity. Moreover, because they thought this also would be of some benefit to the allies whom they were compelled to forsake, they constructed of solid stone, from sea to sea, a wall in a straight

¹ Called by the Durham interpolater of Nennius, 'Cenail;' now Kinnell.

² 'Casibusque foliorum tempore certo assimilendam istam peragunt strategem.' Gildas, 17. This expression, probably, misled Bede.

³ 'Drove northward over the sea.' Saxon version.

line between the cities which had there been built through fear of the enemy, where Severus also had formerly made a trench, which wall, indeed, celebrated until now, and conspicuous, they by public and private expenditure, and the labour of the Britons united with their own, built eight feet broad and twelve high, in a straight line from east to west, as unto this day is manifest to beholders: the which having presently built, they give brave advice to the inert people, and supply them with patterns for furnishing themselves with arms. Moreover, on the shore of the ocean towards the south, where their ships were stationed, because in that quarter also they feared the irruption of the barbarians, they construct towers, at intervals, commanding a view of the sea, and bid farewell to their allies as if never again to come back. On the return of whom to their own country, the Scots and Picts, having understood that they had refused to come again, come back themselves immediately, and, made more bold than usual, take possession of all the northern and extreme part of the island, in place of the natives, as far as the wall. Hereupon a sluggish troop is mounted upon the height of the fortification, where, bewildered with trembling heart, it grew more dispirited day and night. On the other hand, the hooked weapons of the enemy are not idle: the cowardly defenders are continually dragged from the walls, and dashed against the ground. Why more? Having left their cities and the wall, they fly and are dispersed. The enemy pursues; slaughters more cruel than all before follow thick upon each other. For just as lambs by wild beasts, so the wretched citizens are torn in pieces by the enemy: where-

upon being ejected from their abodes and little possessions, they averted the imminent danger of starvation by robbery and mutual plundering, increasing their external calamities by domestic commotions, until all the region was destitute of the supply of any food, except such as could be procured by hunting.

CHAPTER XIII.

How, during the reign of Theodosius the younger, in whose time Palladius¹ was sent to the Scots that believed in Christ, the Britons implored assistance of Ætius the consul, and could not obtain it.

IN the year of the Lord's incarnation 423, Theodosius the younger, the forty-fifth from Augustus, receiving the government after Honorius², held it twenty-six years. In the eighth year of whose reign, Palladius, their first bishop, is sent by Celestinus, the pontiff of the Roman Church, to the Scots that believed in Christ. In the twenty-third year³, however, of his reign, Ætius an illustrious man, who was also a patrician, held for the third time the consulate with Symmachus. To him the poverty-stricken remnant of the Britons send a letter which began thus:—' To Ætius, thrice consul, the groans of the Britons ; ' and further on in the letter they

¹ Palladius appears to have been sent rather to reclaim the Christians among the Scots from the Pelagian heresy. He died almost as soon as he arrived. St. Patrick afterwards went, A.D. 432.

² Theodosius the younger had been Augustus of the East from A.D. 408. Honorius died Aug. 15, A.D. 423. See Socrates, Hist. v. 1, 22.

³ A.D. 446.

thus unfold their calamities: 'The barbarians drive us to the sea, the sea drives us back upon the barbarians; between these there arise two kinds of deaths, we are either slain or drowned.' Nor yet, however, for all this, were they able to obtain any assistance from him, inasmuch as he was at that time engaged in very severe wars with Blædla and Attila, kings of the Huns. And albeit in the previous year Blædla was killed by the treachery of his own brother Attila, Attila himself, notwithstanding, remained such an intolerable opponent to the republic, that he distressed almost the whole of Europe by razing and attacking cities and forts. Moreover, at the same time a famine¹ attacked Constantinople, and soon after a plague followed. In addition to which, most of the walls of the same city, together with fifty-seven towers, fell to the ground: many cities also having fallen, the famine and pestilential odour of the air destroyed very many thousands of men and beasts.

CHAPTER XIV.

How the Britons, compelled by a remarkable famine, drove the barbarians from their territories; and soon after an abundance of the fruits of the earth, luxury, pestilence, and the extermination² of the nation, followed.

IN the meantime the aforesaid famine attacking the Britons more and more, and leaving a lasting report of its malignity to posterity, compelled many of them to surrender to the

¹ Evagrius mentions this famine, Eccles. Hist. i. 17.

² i. e. 'dispossession.'

hostile plunderers, but never could compel others, who rather putting confidence in Divine help when human aid failed them, continually made resistance from the mountains, caves, and forests: and then they first began to inflict disasters on the enemy who for many years had committed depredations in the land. Therefore those impudent brigands, the Irish, return to their homes, intending to come back in a short time. The Picts, in the extreme part of the island, then first, and afterwards also, were quiet. Sometimes, however, after that time they were not slack to plunder and harass the nation of Britons. When the hostile devastation was stopped, the island began to abound with such great quantities of the earth's produce, as no former age remembered; with which luxury also began to increase, and this was speedily attended by the pollution of all wickednesses, cruelty principally, and hatred of truth, and love of falsehood, so that if any one of them seemed more gentle and somewhat more inclined to truth, against him, as if the subverter of Britain, the dislikes and the weapons of all without respect were hurled. And not only did the laity these things, but even the very flock of the Lord and its pastors did them, casting off the light yoke of Christ, and submitting their necks to drunkenness, animosity, strife, contention, enmity, hatred, and other crimes of this kind. In the meantime a severe plague suddenly seized on the men of corrupt mind, which in a short time overthrew so great a multitude of them, that the living did not even suffice to bury the dead. But not even by the death of their friends, or by fear of death, could those who survived be recalled from the death of the soul, by which in sinning they were overthrown:

whence not long after a severe revenge for dreadful wickedness overtook the sinful nation. For counsel was taken as to what should be done, when defence was to be sought for avoiding or repelling such fierce and frequent irruptions of the Northern nations; and it seemed fit to all, together with their king Vortigern, that they should summon to their aid the nation of Saxons from parts beyond the sea; which appears to have been ordered by the will of the Lord, that evil should come against the wicked, as the event of things proved more evidently¹.

CHAPTER XV.

How the nation of Angli, invited to Britain, at first indeed drove their adversaries to a greater distance, but not long after, having united themselves by a treaty with them, turned their arms against their allies.

IN the year from the Lord's incarnation 449, Marcianus, together with Valentinian, the forty-sixth from Augustus, obtained the government, and held it seven years. Then the nation of Angles or Saxons, invited by the aforementioned king², is brought to Britain in three long ships³, and in the eastern part of the island, by the order of the same king, occupies a place of abode, as if about to fight for their country; in fact,

¹ The whole of this chapter, and the greatest part of the two following chapters, is taken from Gildas, 21-26.

² Nennius says that the Saxons were received by Vortigern, A.D. 447.

³ Nennius relates that those who came in the first three ships were obliged to leave the country. (Nenn. 31.) The Saxon Chronicle states that Hengist and Horsa landed at Hypwinesfleet, now Ebsfleet, in Thanet.

however, being about to subvert it. Having, therefore, engaged with the enemy who had come to battle from the north, the Saxons gained the victory¹. Which when it was told at home, and also the fertility of the island, as well as the inertness of the Britons, a fleet more numerous than the former is forthwith sent, carrying a stronger band of armed men², which when joined to the troop already sent made the army invincible. Those who came, therefore, received as a gift from the Britons a place of habitation among them, on the condition that they should fight against their adversaries for the peace and safety of their country, and the Britons should grant them pay for military service. Moreover they had come from three of the most powerful peoples of Germany, that is, the Saxons, the Angles, and the Jutes³. Of the stock of the Jutes are the people of Kent and the Victuarii, that is, the race that occupies the Isle of Wight, and that which unto this day in the province of the West Saxons is called the nation of Jutes, situate over against the Isle of Wight. From the Saxons, that is, from that district which is now known by the name of the 'Land of the Ancient Saxons⁴,' came the East Saxons, the South Saxons, and the West Saxons.

¹ According to Henry of Huntingdon (lib. ii.) at Stamford in Lincolnshire. He says that the Picts and Scots fought with javelins and lances, and the Saxons with pole-axes and long swords. Matthew of Westminster says that Vortigern, who had already given the Saxons a place of settlement in Lindsey, granted them, at the request of Hengist, as a reward for this victory, more land, on which Hengist built a castle called Twancastre, and more recently Ancastre, twenty miles west of Lincoln.

² Five thousand men, in sixteen or eighteen ships. Nennius, 17, adds : 'Henegistus semper ciulas ad se paulatim invitavit.'

³ From Jutland.

⁴ Holstein.

Furthermore, from the Angles, that is, from that country which is called Angulus¹, and is said to have remained from that time unto this day desert, between the provinces of the Jutes and Saxons, the East Angles, the Midland Angles, the Mercians, the whole race of the Nordanhymbri², that is, of those nations which dwell to the north of the river Humber, and the rest of the peoples of the Angles, are sprung. Their first leaders are said to have been two brothers, Hengist and Horsa, of whom Horsa afterwards being killed in war³ by the Britons, has unto this time a monument in the eastern part of Kent with his name inscribed on it. They were, moreover, the sons of Victgilsus, whose father was Vitta, whose father was Vecta, whose father was Woden, from whose stock the royal family of many provinces took its origin⁴. Without delay then, when bands of the beforementioned races vied with each other in pouring into the island, it began to abound in nations of foreigners, so that they were a cause of terror even to the natives themselves who had invited them. Then suddenly, having for the time made a treaty with the Picts whom they had already by warring driven to a greater distance, they begin to turn their

¹ Sleswig. A district is even now called 'Angeln.'

² Northumbrians.

³ The place of the battle was called by the Saxons, Ægelesford; by the Britons, Rit Hergabail, now Aylesford, on the Medway, in Kent. Catigern, son of Vortigern, was killed in the same battle. The place of his monument is said by Sir R. Baker, in his Chronicle, to be Kits-Cotyhouse, and that of Horsa's, Horsted.

⁴ Uffa, king of the East Angles; Æscwin, king of the East Saxons; Creodda, or Crida, king of the Mercii; Ælla, king of the Deiri; Ida, king of the Bernicii; and Cerdic, king of the West Saxons, were descended from Woden.

arms against their allies¹. And first, indeed, they compel them to furnish a more liberal yearly provision, and seeking an occasion of disagreement, they protest that unless a more ample supply of sustenance be given them, they will dissolve the treaty and lay waste all parts of the island. Nor are they at all slow in putting their threats into execution, since, in short, the fire kindled by the hands of these pagans inflicted God's just vengeance for the crimes of the people, not unlike that which, lighted of old by the Chaldæans, consumed the walls, yea, all the buildings of Jerusalem. For in like manner here also the impious victor being the agent, and the just Judge the disposer, it continued depopulating all the neighbouring cities and fields, from the Eastern sea to the Western, with no one to oppose its conflagration, and overran almost all the surface of the perishing island. Public as well as private buildings went to ruin; everywhere priests were slain among the altars; the prelates and the people, without any regard to rank, were alike destroyed by fire and sword, nor were there any to give sepulture to those who were cruelly slain. Some of the miserable remnant were caught and slaughtered in heaps upon the mountains; others, outworn by famine, came forth and surrendered themselves to the enemy for the sake of receiving supplies of sustenance, dooming themselves to undergo perpetual slavery, if they were not immediately slaughtered;

¹ According to the Saxon Chronicle, Ethelwerd, and others, it seems that war began between the Britons and the Saxons in the sixth year after the coming of the latter A.D. 455. The reign of Hengist with his son Oisc, in Kent, is computed from A.D. 455 (Bk. II. Chap. v.). Nennius relates the successes of the Britons, the Saxon Chronicle those of the Saxons.

others, in grief, sought countries beyond the sea; others abiding in their own country, led in fear a miserable life among the mountains, or woods, or lofty rocks, with minds always full of mistrust.

CHAPTER XVI.

How¹ the Britons gained their first victory over the nation of Angles, under the command of Ambrosius, a Roman.

BUT when the hostile army, having destroyed, exterminated, and dispersed the natives of the island, returned home², even those began to regain their strength and courage, emerging from the lurking-places in which they had been hid, and with unanimous consent imploring the aid of Heaven that they might not be continually everywhere utterly destroyed. They had at that time for their leader Ambrosius Aurelianus³, a moderate man, who alone of the Roman

¹ See Gildas, xxv. and xxvi.

² Nennius relates that Vortimer, the son of Vortigern, overcame and expelled the Saxons. Matthew of Westminster says that the Britons under Vortimer, fought with and defeated the Saxons on the river Derwent, A.D. 455; and that they fought three battles with the Saxons in the year 456, and obliged them to retire to Thanet, and afterwards to return to their own country. The Saxon Chronicle, however, says that the Saxons defeated the Britons at Ægelesford, A.D. 455; at Creccanford (Crayford), A.D. 457; and at Wippedsfleet, A.D. 465; where Wipped, a Saxon thane, was killed.

³ Bede, in his Chronicon, places Ambrosius in the reign of Zeno. Nennius says, 'Brittones, propter gravitatem imperii occidebant duces Romanorum, et auxilium postea petebant,' i.e. against the Picts and Scots. Ambrosius seems to have been leader of the Roman, or Romano-Briton, party. Nennius says, '(Brittones) per quadraginta annos fuerunt sub metu. Guorthigernus

nation had, by chance, survived the aforesaid storm, when his parents, who bore the name and insignia of royalty, were killed in it. With him then for a leader, the Britons recover strength, and challenging the victors to battle, themselves by the favour of God gain the victory. And from that day, sometimes the natives, sometimes the enemy, conquered, until the year of the siege of Badon Hill, when they inflicted no slight defeat on that same enemy, about the forty-fourth year from their coming into Britain¹. But of this hereafter.

CHAPTER XVII.

How Germanus the bishop, sailing to Britain with Lupus, by the Divine influence first appeased the tempest of the sea, and afterwards that of the Pelagians².

It is to be remarked, that a few years before their coming, the Pelagian heresy, introduced by Agricola, the son of the

regnabit in Britannia, et dum ipse regnabat in Britannia, urgebatur a metu Pictorum et Scottorum, et a Romano impetu, necnon et a timore Ambrosii.' Nenn. 30, 31. Ambrosius is said by Polydore Vergil, and Matthew of Westminster, to have defeated and slain Hengist, near Doncaster. Some chroniclers state that Stonehenge was erected by him as a monument to the British nobles who were treacherously slain by Hengist; others, that it was erected by the Britons to the memory of Ambrosius. Amesbury is said to have derived its name from him.

¹ Gildas says that he was born in the year in which this battle was fought, i. e. A.D. 492.

² The chapters from xvii. to xxi. inclusive, are mostly taken from a Life of Germanus, written by Constantius, a Presbyter of Lyons.

Bishop Severianus, foully stained with pollution the faith of the Britons. But the Britons¹ being both unwilling to receive in any wise a dogma perverse in blaspheming the grace of Christ, and unequal to refute by controversy of words the subtlety of that wicked persuasion, take wholesome counsel to demand aid in their spiritual war from the Gallican prelates. On which account, when a great synod² had been convoked, they consulted together as to what persons should be sent thither to succour the faith, and by the judgment of all, choice was made of the apostolical priests, Germanus of Autissiodora³, and Lupus of Treca-sena⁴, bishops of these cities, to go to Britain, and confirm the belief in celestial grace. When, with prompt devotedness, they had received the prayers and commands of Holy Church, they embark on the ocean, and to the middle of the voyage which is made from the Gallic coast as far as to Britain, the ship sailed safely with favourable winds. Then suddenly meets them, on their way, the malevolent force of demons who grudged that such and so great men should proceed to recover the salvation of the

¹ Prosper assigns this legation of the Britons to the spring of the year 429.

² Prosper says, ‘*Quod adactione Palladii diaconi papa Cælestinus Germanum vice sua mittit, ut deturbatis hæreticis Britannos ad Catholicam fidem dirigat.*’ Celestine was Pope from A.D. 422 to 432. This Synod was probably held at Troyes.

³ Auxerre. Besides the life of St. Germanus, written in prose by Constantius, Herricus, a monk of Auxerre, wrote one, in verse, in six books. Germanus was born about A.D. 378, consecrated bishop July 7, 418, sent to Britain in 429, and again in 447; he died in July 448.

⁴ Troyes, in Champagne. Lupus was born about the year 383, consecrated bishop about the end of the year 426 or 428, and died July 29, 479.

peoples: they excite storms, they envelope the sky and the day in a night of clouds; the sails endure not the fury of the winds; the sailors overcome, cease to work the vessel; the ship was conducted by prayer, not by strength; and by chance their leader, or chief priest, himself, exhausted in body, was steeped in weariness and sleep. Then, indeed, as if its opponent had yielded, the storm which had arisen increased in violence, and now the ship was ready to sink, overwhelmed with waves. Then the blessed Lupus and all, being troubled, arouse the elder to make resistance against the raging elements; and he, by reason of the hugeness of the peril, with greater constancy invokes Christ, and having taken in the name of the Holy Trinity a little water and sprinkled it, he subdues the infuriated waves, he admonishes his colleague, he exhorts one and all: prayer is poured forth with one mouth and one voice, Divine aid is at hand, the enemies are put to flight, serene calm follows, the winds veering round return to assist the voyage; and having in a short time traversed the watery distance, they enjoy the quiet of the desired shore. There a multitude, coming together from various parts, receives the priests, whose future coming a prediction even of their adversaries had foretold. For the malignant spirits declared what they feared, who, whilst they are cast out by the bidding of the priests from the bodies they had taken possession of, both declared the order of the storm and the perils which they had brought upon them, and confessed themselves overcome by their merits and authority. In the meantime, the apostolical priests speedily filled the island with their reputation, preaching, and virtues; and the Divine Word was daily preached

by them, not only in the churches, but also in the public ways and in the fields, so that everywhere the faithful Catholics were strengthened, and the perverted acknowledged the way of correction. They had, like the apostles, glory and authority by reason of their conscientiousness, learning by their knowledge of letters, virtues from their merits. Therefore the whole of the region readily adopted their opinions. The authors of the malignant persuasion lurked concealed, and after the manner of a malevolent spirit, groaned because the peoples escaped from and were lost to them. At last, after having taken long deliberation, they presume to enter upon a conflict. They come forth conspicuous for their riches, with shining garments, and encircled by the adulation of many; and chose rather to undergo the hazard of a contest, than incur the shame of keeping silence among a people whom they had subverted, lest they should appear to have condemned themselves by their silence. There¹ an infinite multitude, even with their wives and children, had been drawn together; the people were present to see what would take place, and to be the judges. The dissimilar parties stood forth in very different circumstances. On the one side was Divine faith; on the other, human presumption: on the one side, piety; on the other, pride: on the one side, Pelagius the adviser; on the other, Christ. The most blessed priests gave their adversaries liberty of disputing first, who with mere bare-

¹ Hector Boethius, Bk. viii., says that this conference was held at London. Matthew of Westminster (Florilegus) says that it was held at St. Albans, where, says Camden, near the ruins of the old city, stands a chapel dedicated to St. Germanus, built upon the spot where he held this dispute.

ness of words, for a long while to no purpose, occupied their ears and their time. Then the venerable prelates poured forth the torrents of their eloquence, together with apostolical and evangelical sprinklings: their own language was mingled with the Divine, and the testimonies of readings followed their most weighty assertions. Vanity is convinced, perfidy is confuted; so that it confessed itself in the wrong, while it was unable to reply to the separate objections. The arbitrating people scarcely refrain from violence. They signify, however, their judgment by a shout.

CHAPTER XVIII.

How he also gave sight to the blind daughter of a tribune, and then coming to St. Alban's, received there his relics, and deposited those of the blessed apostles and of other martyrs.

THEN suddenly one possessed of tribunical power, comes forth with his wife into the midst, bringing to be healed by the priests his blind daughter, aged twelve years, whom they ordered to be brought to their adversaries; but they, deterred by the sting of conscience, join their prayers with the parents, and entreat the priests to heal the little girl, who perceiving their adversaries broken in spirit, pour forth, in a few words, a prayer, and then Germanus, full of the Holy Ghost, having taken from his neck a casket containing relics of the saints, which was hanging by his side, and clasped it in his hands, applied it in the sight of all to the

eyes of the girl, which, immediately cleared from darkness, were filled with the light of truth. The parents exult, the people is seized with trembling at the miracle: after which day the iniquitous persuasion was so blotted from the minds of all, that with thirsty longings they followed after the doctrine of the priests. Having, therefore, crushed the damnable perversity, and refuted the authors of it, and settled the minds of all in the purity of the faith, the priests sought the tomb of the blessed martyr Albanus, intending to return thanks to God through him, when Germanus, having with him relics of all the apostles, and of various martyrs, having prayed, commanded the sepulchre to be opened¹, intending there to lay up precious gifts, thinking it opportune that the lodging of one tomb should hold the members of saints collected from different regions, whom, being equal in merits, heaven had received. Which being honourably deposited and associated, he took a lump of sod from the very place where the blood of the blessed martyr was poured forth, intending to carry it away with him², in which it appeared, from the blood being still preserved, that the slaughter of martyrs reddens when the persecutor has turned pale. Which things having been thus accomplished, an innumerable crowd of human beings was on the same day converted to the Lord.

¹ Bede here follows Constantius, who, lib. i. c. 25, asserts the same. In the year 1257, a piece of lead was dug up in St. Alban's Church having this inscription, probably of the time of Offa: 'In this mausoleum was found the venerable corpse of St. Albanus, the protomartyr of Britain.'

² 'Intra muros Autisiodori basilicam his reliquiis condendis exædificans S. Albani nomine dedicavit.' Herricus, lib. i. De Miraculis S. Albani.

CHAPTER XIX.

How he also, being detained there on account of an accident, both extinguished the burning of houses by praying, and was himself, through a vision, cured of his debility.

FROM which place whilst they are returning, the insidious enemy, having prepared his stumbling-snares, bruised the foot of Germanus by the occasion of a fall, being ignorant that his merits, like those of most blessed Job, were to be propagated by the affliction of his body ; and whilst for some time he was detained in one place by the necessity of his weakness, a fire burst out in a cottage nigh to the spot where he abode, which, having consumed some houses, which there were usually covered with marsh-reeds, was carried by the stimulus of the wind to that dwelling in which he lay. A concourse of all persons flocked to the prelate, in order that, being lifted up by their hands, he might escape the threatening danger ; having chidden them, he suffered not himself to be moved, through the assurance of his faith. The whole multitude, frightened by their despair, runs to put a stop to the fire. But in order that the power of God might appear more manifest, whatsoever the crowd had endeavoured to guard is consumed, whilst that which he, although lying down and weak, had defended, the lodging of the holy man being spared, the flame in fear leapt across, raging on the farther and near side of it ; and amidst the wreaths of the flaming fire the tabernacle was conspicuous unharmed, which its inclosed inhabitant

was preserving. The crowd exults at the miracle, and congratulates itself on being vanquished by Divine virtues. The common people without number, lay in the open air days and nights before the cottage of the poor man, some desiring the cure of their souls, others of their bodies. Those things cannot be recounted which Christ wrought in His servant, who, being infirm, performed miracles; and when he would suffer no remedy to be applied for his infirmity, he saw, one night, a person stand by him, shining in white garments, who, with extended hand, appeared to raise him as he lay, and commanded him to stand with firm footing; after which time, his pains having been thus put to flight, he recovered his former health, so that on the return of day, he entered upon his laborious journey without fear.

CHAPTER XX.

How the same bishop brought Divine assistance to the Britons in a battle, and so returned home.

IN the meantime, the Saxons¹ and the Picts renewed war, with united forces, against the Britons, whom this same necessity had obliged to take the field; and when in fear

¹ The Britons had, probably, experienced frequent incursions of the Saxons, long before the time of Hengist. Usher, Brit. Eccles. Antiq. xi. p. 181. During the time of the Romans' sovereignty in Britain, an officer called 'tractus maritimi comes' by Marcellinus, or 'Littoris Saxonici comes,' in the Liber Notitiarum, was appointed to guard the coast against incursions, and especially of the Saxons.

they judged their own side to be altogether unequal, they sought the help of the holy prelates, who, hastening their promised coming, brought so much confidence to the fearful Britons, that it might have been believed that a great army was added to them. And so Christ, with the apostolic leaders, took the field. It was, moreover, the time of the forty hallowed days, which the presence of the priests rendered of greater sanctity, insomuch that the people, having been instructed by daily preachings, vied in flocking to receive the grace of baptism. For the greatest part of the army desired the water of the laver of salvation; and for the day of the Lord's resurrection, a church is composed of woven boughs, and, during the campaign, is fitted up like a city. The army proceeds bedewed with baptism, faith glows among the people, and in scorn of the defence of arms, the aid of Divinity is expected. The institution or form of their purification is told the enemy, who, fore-assuring themselves of victory as though over an unarmed force, hasten with fresh alacrity: their approach, however, is made known by scouts. And the paschal solemnity being ended, when the greater part of the army, fresh from the font, set about arming themselves and preparing for war, Germanus professes himself their leader in battle, chooses the nimblest, and scours the neighbouring country, and in the quarter where the approach of the enemy was expected, perceives a valley in the midst of surrounding hills; in which place he draws up an untried army, himself being the leader of the troop. And now the ferocious multitude of the enemy was at hand, which those who were placed in ambush beheld approaching. Then

suddenly Germanus, their standard-bearer, admonishes one and all, and gives order that they should reply with one shout to his voice ; and against their careless enemies, who trusted that they were come unlooked for, the priests exclaim, ' Alleluia¹,' thrice repeated. One voice of all follows, and the recesses of the mountains multiply by the reverberated air the shout raised ; the hostile troop is stricken down with terror, when they fear not only that the rocks around are falling upon them, but even the very fabric of heaven ; and the swiftness of their feet was believed by them scarce sufficient for the terror into which they were cast. They fly everywhere ; they throw away their arms, glad to have snatched were it but their naked bodies from the danger : moreover, the greater part, rushing headlong through fear, were swallowed up in the river which they had crossed. The innocent army beholds itself avenged, and is made an idle spectator of the granted victory. The cast-off spoils are collected, and the religious soldiery embrace the joys of the celestial palm of victory. The priests triumph, having routed the enemy without bloodshed ; they triumph, having obtained the victory by faith, not by force². Having, therefore, settled the island in manifold security, and conquered their enemies, whether invisible or

¹ St. Gregory, in his Exposition of Job xxvii. 6, has these words : ' Ecce lingua Britannia, quæ nil aliud noverat quam barbarum frendere, jamdudum in divinis laudibus Ebraeum coepit Alleluia resonare.' Bede (ii. 1) and Johannes Diaconus believe that he alludes to the conversion of the Saxons. Others think that he refers to this victory of the Britons.

² Usher says, Brit. Eccles. Ant. xi. p. 179, that near Mold, in Flintshire, is a place called ' Maes Garmon,' i. e. the field of German, where the battle was fought.

conspicuous in the flesh, the priests set about returning. Whose own merits, and the intercession of the blessed martyr Albanus, procured them a fair voyage, and the prosperous bark restored them in quiet to the desires of their friends¹.

CHAPTER XXI.

How, on the fresh springing up of the shoots of the Pelagian pest, Germanus having returned to Britain with Severus, first restored the power of walking to a lame youth, and afterward the walking in the way of the faith to the people of God, having condemned or reformed the heretics.

AFTER no great interval of time, news is brought from the same island, that the Pelagian perversity was a second time spread abroad by a few instigators; and again the prayers of all the priests are brought to the most blessed man, that he would defend the cause of God, which he had before asserted; with whose petition he speedily complies. For having joined to himself Severus², a man of entire sanctity, who was a disciple of the most blessed father Lupus, Bishop of Treves, and at that time, having been ordained Bishop of the Treviri³, was preaching the Word to the nations of Upper Germany, he embarked, and, with the

¹ Some later MSS. have this addition: 'Remansit autem in insula genus utrumque, hostes et cives, quorum Angli pro regno, Britones pro vita, certabant.'

² Severus, Archbishop of Treves, died about the year 455.

³ Tacitus, Ann. i. 31, &c.

consent of the elements, made a tranquil voyage to Britain ¹. In the meantime, the evil spirits flying through the island, proclaimed, against their will, by predictions, the coming of Germanus, insomuch that one Elafius, the chief person of that region, without any tidings brought by a manifest messenger, hastened as if to meet the saints, taking his son with him, whom, in the very flower of youth, a grievous debility had doomed, for his knee was contracted by the shrinking of the sinews, and, by reason of the dryness of the leg, the power of walking was denied him. The whole province follows after this Elafius. The priests come; the ignorant multitude meets them; forthwith a blessing and the doctrine of the Divine Word is outpoured. They discover that the people continue in the same belief in which they had left them; they understand that the fault is of a few; they enquire for the authors, and condemn them when found out. When suddenly Elafius casts himself at the feet of the priests, showing his son, whose necessity his very debility, even were prayers wanting, alleged. It becomes the common grief of all, especially of the priests, who brought unto the Divine clemency the pity which they had conceived, and immediately the blessed Germanus constrained the youth to sit down; he strikes his knee which was crooked with the debility, and his medicinal hand passes over the whole extent of the infirmity, and speedy soundness follows upon the healthful touch: the dryness recovers moisture, the sinews recover their offices, and, in the sight of all, health

¹ Prosper dates the two missions of Germanus A.D. 429 and 435. Constantius and Bede, A.D. 446 and 453, respectively. (Smith).

is restored to the son, the son to the father. The people are filled with wonder at the miracle, and the implanted Catholic faith is confirmed in the breasts of all. Preaching is then directed to the common people, for the correcting of the perversity, and by the judgment of all, the authors of the perversion, who were expelled from the island, are brought to the priests to be carried to the continent, that both the region might obtain release, and they correction. And it was brought about that in those places, long after that time, the faith remained inviolate. Therefore, having settled all things, the blessed priests returned with that prosperity with which they had come¹. Moreover, Germanus afterwards went to Ravenna², to supplicate for peace for the Armorican nation, and there having been received with the greatest respect by Valentinian and his mother Placidia, he departed hence to Christ. His body is brought to his own city by a procession made in honour of him, and attended by works of miraculous powers; and not long after³, Valentinian is cut off by the body-guard of the patrician Aëtius, whom he had put to death, in the sixth year of the reign of Marcianus, and with him the empire of the West fell at the same time.

¹ Here end the extracts from Constantius.

² Constantius says that Germanus returned to France, and after a short residence there, went to Italy, where he died, July 31, A.D. 448. (Stevenson).

³ A.D. 455.

CHAPTER XXII.

How the Britons, when their external enemies were quiet, wasted themselves in civil wars, and at the same time steeped themselves in greater crimes.

IN the meanwhile, there was in Britain a respite indeed from external enemies for a time, but not from civil wars. The desolate state of towns which had been destroyed by the enemy, and deserted, remained: the natives who had escaped the enemy, now fought against each other. However, whilst the memory of the calamity and inflicted slaughter was as yet fresh, the kings, priests, private persons, and nobility, in some measure retained each their own order. But on their decease, when a generation succeeded which was ignorant of that season of adversity, and had only experienced the state of present calm, then all the bounds of truth and justice were shaken and subverted, so that, I will not say, not a vestige of them, but not the memory even at all appeared, except in a few, and those a very few, instances. And they, amongst other deeds of unutterable wickednesses, which their historian Gildas¹ describes with mournful language, added this also, that they never committed the word of the faith, by preaching, to the nation of Saxons or Angles inhabiting Britain with themselves. The Divine goodness, however, deserted not its people whom it foreknew, but destined much more

¹ See Gildas xxvi. Gilda or Gilla, in the Irish language, means 'a servant,' 'gillie.'

worthy heralds of the truth for the aforesaid nation, through whom it might believe¹.

CHAPTER XXIII.

How the holy Pope Gregory, sending Augustine with some monks to preach to the nation of the Angles, by a letter also of exhortation encouraged them not to cease from labouring.

FORASMUCH as in the year from the incarnation of the Lord 582, Mauricius, the fifty-fourth from Augustus, undertaking the government, held it for twenty-one years; in the tenth year of whose reign², Gregory, a man eminent in learning and action, obtained the pontificate of the Roman and apostolical see, and ruled thirteen years, six months, and ten days; and he, having been admonished by Divine inspiration, in the fourteenth year³ of the same prince, and at about the 150th year of the coming of the Angles into Britain, sent Augustine, the servant of God, and many other monks⁴ with him, who feared the Lord, to preach the Word of God to the nation of the Angles; who, when they had begun to set about the aforesaid work, in obedience to the orders of the Pope, and

¹ The Western Picts were converted by Nynias, a Briton, at the end of the fourth century. St. Patricius died A.D. 491. He founded the Church of Armagh, A.D. 444 (Annals of Ulster) or A.D. 457 (Annals by the Four Masters). St. Brigida died A.D. 518, in Scotland.

² Mauricius was made emperor August 14, A.D. 582. Gregory was made pope September 3, A.D. 590, which was the ninth year of the reign of Mauricius. Mauricius was slain by Phocas, November, A.D. 602, and therefore reigned twenty years and about three months.

³ A.D. 496.

⁴ About forty. Greg. Epist. vi. 58.

had already accomplished some portion of the journey¹, being stricken with craven fear, thought to return home, rather than go to a barbarous, fierce, and unbelieving nation, whose very language they knew not; and determined, by common consent, that this was the safer course. Without delay, then, they send home Augustine, who had been appointed to be ordained their bishop, in case they were received by the Angles, in order that he might, by humble supplication, obtain from the blessed Gregory that they should not be obliged to enter upon so dangerous, so laborious, and so uncertain a peregrination. To whom he sends letters of exhortation, and persuades them to set out for the work of the Word, relying on Divine assistance. Of which letter this is, to wit, the form:—‘Gregory, servant of the servants of God, to the servants of our Lord. Because it had been better not to begin good things, than to retrograde in thought from these when begun, it behoves you, most beloved sons, to accomplish the good work which, with the assistance of God, you have begun. Let not, then, the labour of the journey or the tongues of slanderous men deter you, but with all instancy, and all fervour, finish what, with God for your adviser, you have begun, knowing that a greater glory of eternal reward follows a great labour. Moreover, obey humbly in all things Augustine, on his return, your chief officer², whom we have also appointed your abbot, knowing

¹ It appears from St. Gregory’s letters that Augustine’s companions stopped in Provence, not far from the island of Lerins.

² Augustine was prior of the monastery of St. Andrew, which St. Gregory founded at Rome. The monks who accompanied him belonged to this monastery.

that whatever shall have been completed by you in his admonition, this will be profitable to your souls in all things. The omnipotent God protect you with His grace, and grant me to see in the eternal country the fruit of your labour; so that, although I am unable to labour with you, I may be found together with you in the joy of reward, because, forsooth, I wish to labour. God keep you safe, most beloved sons. Given on the tenth day of the Kalends of August¹, in the fourteenth year of the reign of our master Mauricius Tiberius, the most pious Augustus, in the thirteenth year after the consulship of the same our master, in the fourteenth indiction.'

CHAPTER XXIV.

How he sent a letter to the Bishop of Arles, to provide for their reception.

THE same venerable pontiff sent then also a letter to Etherius, Bishop of Arles², to request that he would receive Augustine kindly on his way to Britain; of which letter these are the words:—'To the most reverend and holy brother, Etherius my fellow-bishop, Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. Although, among priests, religious men having the charity that is pleasing to God, want the recommendation of no one, yet because a suitable time for writing offered itself, we have taken care to transmit our writing to you, my brother, purporting that Augustine, the

¹ July 23.

² Virgilius was at this time Bishop of Arles; Etherius was Bishop of Lyons.

servant of God, of whose zeal we are well assured, with other servants of God, the bearers of these presents, has been directed thither by us for the benefit of souls, by the help of the Lord; whom it is necessary that your holiness should hasten, with sacerdotal zeal, to assist and afford your consolations to him. Whom, also, we have enjoined to make known to you exactly the cause, in order that you may be able to be more ready to lend your support; knowing that when you have understood it, you, on God's behalf, will frame yourselves with all devotion to give that consolation which the matter requires. Furthermore, we commend in all things to your charity Candidus, the priest, our common son, whom we have sent over, to govern a small patrimony of our Church¹. God keep you safe, most reverend brother. Given on the tenth day of the Kalends of August, in the fourteenth year of the reign of our master Mauricius Tiberius, the most pious Augustus, in the thirteenth year after the consulship of the same our master, in the fourteenth indiction.'

CHAPTER XXV.

How Augustine, coming to Britain, preached first to the king of the Cantuarii, in the island of Thanet, and then, having received permission from him, went into Kent to preach.

HAVING been strengthened, therefore, by the encouragement of the blessed father Gregory, Augustine, with the servants of Christ who were with him, returned to the work of

¹ The care of superintending the estates of the Roman see was generally entrusted to clerics.

the Word, and came to Britain¹. At that time², King Ædilberct, in Kent, was most powerful, who had extended the borders of his empire unto the confines of the great river Humber, by which the northern and southern peoples of the Angles are separated. The isle of Tanatos³ is towards the eastern part of Kent, of no small size, that is, of magnitude to contain six hundred families⁴, according to the Angles' custom of reckoning. The river Vantsumu, which separates it from the mainland, is about three stadia in breadth, and is fordable in two places only, for each end extends into the sea. In this island, then, Augustine, the servant of the Lord, and his companions, being about forty, as they say, landed. Moreover, they received, by the charge of the blessed Pope Gregory, interpreters from the nation of the Franks; and sending to Ædilberct, he gave orders to say that they had come from Rome, and brought the best message, which promised, without any doubt, to those who obeyed it, eternal joys in heaven, and a future kingdom without end with the living and true God. He, on hearing these things, commanded them to remain in the island to which they had come, and that necessities should be afforded them, until he should see what to do

¹ Augustine came to Britain A.D. 597. See Bk. V. Chap. xxiv.

² The thirty-seventh year of Ædilberct's reign. He was born A.D. 552, Sax. Chron. The Saxon Chronicle dates his accession A.D. 565; but Bede says he died Feb. 24, A.D. 616, after reigning fifty-six years, which would place his accession in A.D. 560. For his ancestors see Bk. V. Chap. v.

³ Thanet, now separated from Kent by a small stream spanned by a bridge of one arch.

⁴ About 6000 acres; a hide, or 100 acres, being the portion of one family. Later, a hide was 33 $\frac{1}{8}$ acres.

respecting them. For before this the fame of the Christian religion had reached him, inasmuch as he had a Christian wife of the royal family of the Franks, by name Bercta¹, whom he had received from her parents upon this condition, that she might have leave to keep inviolate the rite of her faith and religion, with the bishop, by name Luidhard², whom they had given her as an assistant of her faith. After some days, the king came to the island, and sitting in the open air, commanded Augustine with his companions to come there to conference with him. For being influenced by an ancient superstition, he had taken precaution that they should not come to him in any house, lest, on their arrival, if they had any knowledge of witchcraft, they might deceive him by taking some advantage of him. But they came endued not with demoniac but with divine virtue, bearing a silver cross for a standard, and the image of the Lord and Saviour painted on a panel; and singing litanies, both for their own eternal salvation and theirs on account of, and to whom, they had come, they made supplication unto the Lord. And when taking their seats at the command of the king, they preached to him, together with all his attendants who were present, the word of life, he replied, saying, fair indeed are the words and the promises which you bring, but, because they are new and uncertain, I cannot give my assent to them, and leave those which for so long a time I have kept with all the nation of the Angles. But since you have come hither strangers from a great distance, and, as I appear to myself to

¹ The daughter of Chariberct, and grand-daughter of Clothaire I.

² Bishop of Senlis.

thoroughly understand, you have desired to communicate to us also those things which you believe to be true and best, we are unwilling to molest you; but rather we take care to receive you with kind hospitality, and to minister the things which are necessary for your sustenance: nor do we prohibit you from gaining by your preaching all whom ye are able to the faith of your religion. He gave them therefore an abode in the city of Doruvern¹, which was the metropolis of the whole of his dominions, and, as he had promised, he not only supplied them with temporal sustenance, but took not away from them the liberty of preaching. It is also reported that on their approaching the city after their manner with the holy cross and the image of the Great King, our Lord Jesus Christ, they sang with accordant voice this litany: 'We beseech Thee, O Lord, in all Thy mercy, that Thy fury and Thy anger may be taken away from this city and from Thy holy house, since we have sinned. Alleluia.'

CHAPTER XXVI.

How he also, in Kent, imitated the doctrine and manner of life of the Primitive Church, and received an episcopal see in the city of the king.

BUT when they had entered the house allotted to them, they began to imitate the apostolic life of the early Church; to wit, by serving with constant prayers, watchings, and fastings, by preaching the word of life to whom they were able,

¹ Now Canterbury. W. Thorn says it was in that part of the town which is called Stablegate.

by contemning all things of this world as strange to them, by receiving those things only which seemed necessary for food from those whom they taught, by living in all respects according to the precepts which they themselves taught, and by having their minds prepared to suffer all adversities, or even to die for that truth which they preached. Why more? Some believed and were baptized, admiring the simplicity of their innocent life, and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine. There was, moreover, near the same city, towards the east, a church anciently built in honour of St. Martin¹, while the Romans still inhabited Britain, in which the queen, who, as I before said, was a Christian, was accustomed to pray. In this then they first began to assemble, to chaunt, to pray, to celebrate masses, to preach, and to baptize, until, when the king had been converted to the faith, they received greater licence of preaching throughout all parts, and of building or restoring churches. But when he also among others, delighted with the most pure life of the saints and their most sweet promises which they had confirmed to be true by the showing also of many miracles, believed and was baptized², more began to assemble to hear the word, and having left the rites of heathenism, to join themselves, by believing, to the sacred Church of Christ. With whose faith and conversion the king is said to have been so pleased, that although he compelled no one to embrace Christianity, he yet embraced the believing with a more close love, as

¹ This church is said to have been the seat of a suffragan bishop until the time of Lanfranc. *Monast. Anglic.* i. 26, ed. 1655.

² This is said to have taken place on the day of Pentecost, June 2, A.D. 597.

being his fellow citizens of the heavenly kingdom. For he had learnt from the teachers and authors of his salvation, that the service of Christ ought to be voluntary, not compulsory. Nor did he delay to give also to his teachers a place of abode, suitable to their degree, in his own metropolis of Doruvern¹, and also to confer upon them necessary possessions of different kinds.

CHAPTER XXVII.

How the same, having been made bishop, sent word to Pope Gregory concerning what had been done in Britain, and, at the same time, asked for and received his answers on necessary matters.

IN the meantime, the man of the Lord, Augustine, came to Arles, and was ordained archbishop² of the English nation by Ætherius, the archbishop of that city, according as they had received command of the holy father Gregory; and, on his return to Britain, sent forthwith to Rome Laurentius a presbyter, and Peter a monk, to tell the blessed pontiff Gregory that the English nation had received the faith of Christ, and that he himself had been made bishop: at the same time also asking his advice concerning those questions which seemed to be necessary. Without delay, he received replies suitable to his enquiry, which also I have thought fit to insert in this history.

¹ Ædilberct built a new palace at Regulbium, now Reculver, where he went to reside. Monast. Anglic. p. 25.

² It appears from a letter of St. Gregory, Epist. viii. 30, written A.D. 598, that Augustine was ordained and had returned to Britain before Christmas, A.D. 597.

I. Question of the blessed Augustine, bishop of the Church of the Kentish people. Concerning the bishops, how they should converse with their clergy? and concerning those oblations of the faithful which are made at the altar, what apportionments ought to be made; and how a bishop ought to act in the Church?’

Gregory, pope of the city of Rome, answers. ‘Sacred Scripture, with which it is not doubtful that you are well acquainted, testifies, and specially the Epistles of St. Paul to Timothy, in which he strove to teach him how he ought to behave in the house of God. It is the custom¹, however, of the apostolical see to deliver to ordained bishops precepts, that of every oblation which is made, there ought to be four portions, one, to wit, for the bishop and his household, on account of hospitality and entertainment; another for the clergy; a third for the poor; a fourth for the repairing of churches. But because you, my brother, having been instructed in the rules of the monastery, ought not to live apart from your clergy² in the Church of the English, which by the aid of God was but lately brought to the faith, you ought to institute that conversation which was our fathers’ in the beginning of the Early Church; among whom none of them said that anything was his own of those things which they possessed, but all things were common to them. If, however, there are any clerics appointed, not in holy orders³, who cannot be continent, they

¹ That this was the custom at Rome a hundred years previously, is evident from a letter of Pope Gelasius, A. D. 494.

² At the second Council of Tours, can. 13, A. D. 567, it was specially ordered that bishops should live in common with their clergy.

³ Ecgberct, archbishop of York, *Pœnitentiale*. ‘Duo sunt genera cleri-

ought to have wives, and to receive their stipend, being without. Because also concerning the same fathers of whom we before spoke, we know the Scripture¹, that division was made to each according as every one had need. Thought and care are to be taken also concerning their stipends, and they are to be kept under ecclesiastical rule, that they may lead good moral lives, and watch unto the singing of psalms, and, by the aid of God, keep their heart, and tongue, and body from all unlawful things. But what must we say to those who live in common, concerning apportionments, or showing hospitality, or fulfilling pity? Inasmuch as all that remains over, is to be spent in the cause of piety and religion, according to the teaching of the Lord, the Master of all, "what remains give in alms, and behold all things are clean unto you²."

II. Question of Augustine. 'When there is but one faith, why are there different customs of Churches, and why is one custom of masses observed in the holy Roman Church, and another in the Church of Gaul?'

Pope Gregory answers. 'You, my brother, know the custom of the Romish Church, in which you remember that you were yourself brought up. But my sentence is that whether in the Roman, or the Gallican, or in any Church, you have found anything which may be more pleasing to omnipotent God, you carefully select, and with special

corum : unum ecclesiasticorum sub episcopali regimine, alterum acephalorum, i. e. sine capite ; de quibus Gregorius dicit ; si qui clerici vulgares sunt, extra sacros ordines constituti, i. e. nec presbyteri nec diaconi, qui se continere non possunt, sortiri uxores debent, et stipendia sua exterius accipere. Sacerdotes autem nequaquam uxores ducant.' Wilkins, Concilia, I. p. 112.

¹ Acts iv. 35.

² Luke xi. 41. Vulgate, 'Veruntamen quod superest.'

instruction impart to the Church of the English, which as yet is new to the faith, what things you have been able to collect from many Churches. For things are not to be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things. From each individual Church, therefore, choose the things which are pious, which are religious, which are right, and deposit these things, when you have collected them as it were into a bundle, in the minds of the English for their use.'

III. Question of Augustine. 'I ask what he ought to suffer who shall have taken anything by theft from a church?'

Gregory answers. 'You, my brother, are able to compute, according to the person of the thief, how he ought to be corrected; for there are some who, having supplies, perpetrate theft; and there are others who transgress in this matter from poverty: wherefore it is necessary that some should be corrected by fines, others by beatings; and some with greater severity, others again more leniently. And when it is done rather more severely, it ought to be done from charity, and not from anger; because this is done to him who is corrected, in order that he should not be delivered to the fires of Gehenna. For so we ought to maintain discipline for the faithful, as good fathers are wont for their children in the flesh, whom they both beat for faults, and yet desire to have for their heirs those very ones whom they afflict with pains; and the things which they possess they keep for those very ones whom they seem to punish with anger. This charity, then, is to be kept in mind, and itself dictates the manner of correction, so that the mind should do nothing at all beyond

the rule of reason. You may add, also, how they ought to restore those things which they take by theft from churches. But by no means let a church regain with augmentation what it seems to lose from its worldly substance, and seek gain from vain things¹.

IV. Question of Augustine. 'If two brothers, by the same father and mother may marry two sisters who are of a family far removed from them?'

Gregory answers. 'This, by all means, is lawful to be done, for nowhere in the sacred oracles is there found anything which appears to contradict this point.'

V. Question of Augustine. 'Within how many generations ought the faithful to be joined in wedlock to their relations? And if it be lawful to be joined in wedlock to a stepmother; or a brother's wife²?'

Gregory answers. 'A certain earthly law in the Roman republic permits that the son and daughter, either of a brother and sister, may marry, or of two brothers german, or of two sisters³. But we have learnt by trial that the offspring of such a wedlock cannot thrive. And the sacred law forbids revealing the nakedness of relations. Wherefore it is necessary that the faithful should not freely intermarry, before the third or fourth generation: for the second, as we said before, ought by all means to abstain from one another. But to marry with one's mother-in-law is a great crime,

¹ de vanis' 'de damnis quærat.' Bened. edit.

² cognatis: 'brothor wifum,' brother's wife, Saxon Version.

³ Justinian, Institutes, i. 10, 4, where Vinnius in a note observes, on the authority of Aurelius Victor, that Theodosius Major had prohibited such an union, but that his sons had revoked the prohibition.

because it is also written in the Law, "Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father¹." For neither may the son uncover the nakedness of his father. But because it is written, "They shall be two in one flesh²," he who has presumed to uncover the nakedness of his mother-in-law, who was one flesh with his father, assuredly has uncovered the nakedness of his father also. To marry with one's sister-in-law is prohibited, because by former conjunction she was made the flesh of his brother. For which thing also John the Baptist was beheaded, and consummated by holy martyrdom, who was not ordered to deny Christ, and was killed for the confession of Christ. But inasmuch as the same our Lord Jesus Christ had said, "I am the Truth³," because John was killed for the truth, it follows, also, that he shed his blood for Christ. But because there are many in the nation of the English who, whilst they were still in infidelity, are said to have been joined in this impious wedlock, they are, on coming to the faith, to be admonished that they abstain themselves, and look upon this as a grievous offence. Let them fear the tremendous judgment of God, lest for the sake of their carnal delectation they incur the torments of eternal suffering. Yet they are not, for this thing, to be kept from the communion of the sacred body and blood of the Lord, lest they seem to be punished for those things in which, through ignorance, they bound themselves before the washing of baptism. For at this time the holy Church corrects some things with zeal, endures some things with gentleness, connives at some things through considerateness, and so bears and connives that she often

¹ Levit. xviii. 7.² Gen. ii. 24.³ John xiv. 6.

restrains the evil which is opposed to her by bearing and conniving. But all who come to the faith are to be admonished that they venture not to perpetrate any such thing. But if any shall have perpetrated it, they are to be kept from the communion of the body and blood of the Lord, because, as in those who have done it through ignorance, the fault is to a certain extent to be tolerated, so in those who fear not to sin knowingly, it is strictly to be punished.'

VI. Question of Augustine. 'If a great length of journey intervenes, so that bishops cannot easily come together, whether a bishop ought to be ordained without the presence of other bishops?'

Gregory answers. 'Truly, in the Church of the English, in which as yet you are found the only bishop, you cannot ordain a bishop otherwise than without other bishops. For when do bishops come from Gaul, who may assist as witnesses in the ordination of bishops? But we wish you, my brother, so to ordain bishops, that the bishops may not be separated by a long distance, so that there be no difficulty in the ordination of a bishop, for other pastors also whose presence is very useful, readily to meet together. When, therefore, with the aid of God, bishops shall so have been ordained in places neighbouring to one another, no ordination of a bishop ought to take place without three or four bishops being assembled together. For even in spiritual things, that they may be wisely and properly managed, we may take an example from carnal things. For, truly, when marriages are celebrated in the world, those who have been married are called together, in

order that they who have preceded in the way of wedlock may mingle also in the joy of the subsequent union. Why, then, also in this spiritual ordination, by which, through the sacred ministry, man is joined to God, may not such meet together as may either rejoice in the advancement of the ordained bishop, or pour forth alike prayers to omnipotent God for his preservation ?'

VII. Question of Augustine. 'How ought we to act with the bishops of Gaul and Britain ?'

Gregory answers. 'We assign no authority to you over the bishops of Gaul; because, from the ancient times of my predecessors, the Bishop of Arles received the pall, whom we by no means ought to deprive of his enjoyed authority. If, therefore, it happen that you, my brother, should pass over to the province of Gaul, you ought to act in concert with the same Bishop of Arles, so that if there are any faults in the bishops, they may be corrected. And if perchance he be lukewarm in enforcing discipline, he is to be influenced by your zeal. To whom also we have sent letters¹, that when your holiness is present in Gaul, he also with his whole mind may assist you, and prune from the manners of the bishops those things which are contrary to the command of our Creator. But you yourself will not have power to judge the bishops of Gaul beyond your proper authority; but by persuading, soothing, and showing good works also for their imitation, you shall reclaim the minds of the perverse to the pursuit of holiness, because it is written in the Law, that in passing through another man's cornfield, one ought not to put in the sickle,

¹ Bede gives the letter, chap. xxviii.

but to rub the ears in his hand, and eat them¹. For you may not put in the sickle of judgment in that cornfield which appears to be committed to another; but through the desire of a good work, you shall strip the Lord's corn of the chaff of its vices; and by admonishing and persuading; you shall convert it into the body of the Church, as it were, by eating². But whatever is to be done by authority, let it be done in conjunction with the aforesaid Bishop of Arles, lest possibly that should be neglected which the ancient institution of our fathers appointed. But we commit all the bishops of Britain to you, my brother, that the unlearned may be taught, the infirm strengthened by persuasion, the perverse corrected by authority.'

VIII. Question of Augustine. 'If a pregnant woman ought to be baptized; or when she has brought forth, after what time may she enter the church; or after how many days is it lawful for her offspring to receive the sacrament of holy baptism, lest it should be prevented by death? or after what time may her husband have carnal intercourse with her; or if while she has her courses, whether it is lawful for her to enter the church, or to receive the sacrament of holy communion? or whether a man, having had intercourse with his wife, may enter a church before he is washed with water, or approach the mystery of holy communion? All which things ought to be resolved for the uninstructed nation of the Angles.'

Gregory answers. 'I doubt not that you, my brother, have been consulted on these points, and I think that I have already returned you an answer. But I feel assured

¹ Deut. xxiii. 25.

² manducando.

that you wished that what you yourself said and thought should be confirmed by my answer. For why indeed ought not a pregnant woman be baptized, when fecundity of the flesh hath no blame before the eyes of omnipotent God? For when our first parents had sinned in Paradise, they lost, by the right judgment of God, the immortality which they had received. Because, therefore, the omnipotent God was unwilling utterly to extinguish in them the human race for their fault, and took away immortality from man for his sin; nevertheless, according to the kindness of His tender mercy, he reserved for him fruitfulness in propagation. How, therefore, can that which was preserved, by the gift of omnipotent God to human nature, be prohibited from the grace of holy baptism? Forasmuch as it is very foolish to think that a *gift* can be opposed to grace in that mystery in which all fault is utterly extinguished. When, however, a woman shall have brought forth, after how many days she may enter the church, you have been taught by the precept of the Old Testament¹, that for a male child she ought to abstain thirty-three days, and for a female sixty-six days. Which, however, is to be understood as received in a mystery. For, if in the same hour in which she bring forth, she enter the church to give thanks, she is burthened with no weight of sin; for the pleasure of the flesh, not the pain, is in fault. Moreover, in the intercourse of the flesh there is pleasure, but in the bringing forth of offspring, groaning; whence it was said to the first mother of all, "In sorrow shalt thou bring forth²." If, therefore, we prohibit a woman, having passed her delivery, from

¹ Lev. xii. 2-5.² Gen. iii. 16.

entering a church, we impute her punishment itself as a fault to her. But to baptize either a woman who has been delivered, or that which she has brought forth, if there is imminent danger of death, or herself, in the same hour in which she brings forth, or that which is brought forth, in the same hour in which it is born, is in no wise prohibited; because, just as the grace of the sacred mystery is to be guarded with great discretion for the living and understanding, so is it to be offered without any delay to those whom death threatens, lest whilst yet time is sought to afford the mystery of redemption, a little delay intervening, there may be none found who can be redeemed. Her husband, however, ought not to approach to lie with her until that which is brought forth is weaned. A depraved custom has arisen in the habits of married persons, in that women neglect to nourish the children which they bring forth, and deliver them to other women to be nourished, which indeed seems invented from the sole cause of incontinency, because, while they are unwilling to contain themselves, they scorn to suckle those whom they bring forth. These women, therefore, who from a depraved custom, deliver their children to others to be nourished, ought not to have intercourse with their husbands until the time of their cleansing shall have passed. Inasmuch as, apart from childbirth, women are prohibited from having intercourse with their husbands when they have their monthly courses; insomuch, that the Sacred Law strikes with sentence of death any man who approaches a menstruous woman¹. The woman, however, ought not to

¹ Lev. xx. 18.

be prohibited from entering the church while she has her monthly courses, because the superfluity of nature ought not to be reckoned as a fault to her; and it is not just that she should be prevented by this, which she suffers involuntarily, from entering the church. For we know that the woman who suffered from a flux of blood ¹, coming with humility behind the Lord, touched the hem of His garment, and her infirmity immediately departed from her. If she, therefore, who suffered from a flux of blood, could commendably touch the garment of the Lord, why should it not be lawful for her, who has the monthly courses, to enter the church of the Lord? But you say, infirmity constrained her; but custom constrains these of whom we speak. But consider well, dearest brother, that everything which we suffer in this mortal flesh from the infirmity of nature, was ordained by the just judgment of God, after the first offence. For to be hungry, to be thirsty, to be hot, to be cold, to be weary, is from the infirmity of nature. And what else is it, to seek for food against hunger, drink against thirst, air against heat, clothing against cold, rest against weariness, than to search for a certain medicine against ailments? So also the menstruous flow of blood of the woman is her ailment. If, therefore, she presumed rightly, who, in a condition of weakness, touched the Lord's garment, why is not that which was granted to one person labouring under infirmity, granted to all women, who are subject to weakness by the fault of their nature? Moreover, she ought not to be prohibited from receiving the mystery of the holy communion on the same days. If, however,

¹ Luke viii. 43.

from great veneration, she presumes not to receive it, she is to be praised; but if she receive it, she is not to be judged. For it is the quality of good minds, there also in some measure to acknowledge their faults even where there is no fault, because often that which proceeds from fault is done without fault; whence, also, when we eat, we eat without fault, whom the fault of the first man caused to hunger. For the menstruous affection is no fault to women, because it naturally befalls them. But yet, because nature itself is so vitiated that even without the aim of the will it seems to be polluted, defect arises from fault, in which human nature may recognise itself, such as it was made by judgment. And let man who wilfully perpetrated the fault, bear against his will the criminality of the fault. And, therefore, women when they sit by themselves, if while they have their courses, they do not presume to approach the sacrament of the Lord's body and blood, are to be praised for their right consideration; when, however, they are ravished with a desire of partaking of the same mystery, from the custom of a religious life, as I said before, they are not to be blamed. For as in the Old Testament outward works are observed, so in the New Testament, not so much that which is done outwardly as that which is thought inwardly, is attended to with careful regard, that it may be punished by a discerning sentence. For whereas the Law prohibits the eating many things as being unclean, the Lord says, in the Gospel, "Not that which enters into the mouth defileth a man, but the things which go out of the mouth; these are they which defile a man¹." And, a

¹ Matt. xv. 11.

little after, He adds in explanation, "From the heart proceed evil thoughts¹." Where it is abundantly shown that that is declared by omnipotent God to be polluted in deed, which is generated from the root of a polluted thought. Whence also the Apostle Paul says, "To the clean all things are clean, but to the defiled and unbelieving nothing is clean²;" and afterwards, declaring the cause of the same pollution, he adds: "For their mind and conscience are defiled." If, therefore, food is not unclean to him who has not an unclean mind, why should that which a woman of clean mind suffers by nature, be reckoned an impurity? But a man who has approached his own wife, ought not to enter a church unless he has washed with water, nor, having washed, ought he to enter it immediately. The law, moreover, prescribed to the ancient people, that a man having had intercourse with a woman should be washed with water³, and not enter a church before sunset; which, however, may be understood spiritually. Because a man has intercourse with a woman, when his mind is joined in thought, by delectation, to unlawful concupiscence; for, unless the fire of concupiscence first cease to glow in his mind, he who perceives himself burdened by the iniquity of a depraved will, ought not to think himself worthy to enter the congregation of the brethren; although concerning this thing different nations of men think differently, and seem to observe different customs. It was always, however, the custom of the Romans, from the more ancient of them, after intercourse with one's own wife, both to seek the purification of the laver, and for a little time reverently to

¹ Matt. xv. 19.² Titus i. 15.³ Lev. xv. 16, 17.

abstain from entering a church. Nor, saying these things, do we set down wedlock to be a fault; but forasmuch as lawful intercourse with a wife cannot take place without pleasure of the flesh, one must abstain from entering a sacred place, because the pleasure itself can in no wise be without blame. For not of adultery, nor of fornication, but of lawful wedlock, had he been born, who said, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquities, and in sins my mother conceived me¹." For he who knew that he was conceived in iniquities, lamented that he was sprung from a fault; because a tree bears, in the branch, the sap of defect which it drew from the root. In which words, however, he does not speak of the intercourse of husband and wife as iniquity, but of the pleasure itself, to wit, of the intercourse. For indeed there are many things which are proved to be allowable and lawful, and yet in doing them we are, to a certain extent, polluted; just as we often reprove faults with anger, and disturb within ourselves our tranquillity of mind; and though that which is done is right, it is not to be approved that the mind should be disturbed in it. For, in truth, against the vices of sinners he was angry who said, "Mine eye is disturbed through anger²." For, because only a tranquil mind can elevate itself into the light of contemplation, he grieved that his eye was disturbed with anger; because, whilst it took notice of evil deeds below, it was compelled to be disturbed and hindered from the contemplation of highest things. Anger

¹ Psalm li. 5. Objection may here be made to Gregory's theology, on the ground that this text probably relates only to the inherited corruption of human nature.

² Psalm vi. 7 (Vulgate).

against vice is, then, praiseworthy and yet grievous, by being disturbed by which he thought that he had incurred some guilt. It behoves, therefore, that fleshly union, albeit lawful, should be for the sake of offspring, not pleasure; and fleshly intercourse for the sake of procreating children, not to satisfy vices. If, however, any one approaches his wife, not captivated with the desire of pleasure, but only for the sake of procreating children, he assuredly is to be left to his own judgment, either as to the entering of a church, or as to the reception of the mystery of the Lord's body and blood; because he ought not to be prohibited by us from receiving it, who being placed in the fire, cannot burn. When, however, not the love of begetting offspring, but pleasure, reigns in the act of intercourse, even married persons have reason to lament their intercourse. For this the sacred preaching allows them, and yet, concerning the concession itself, it shakes the mind with fear. For when the Apostle Paul said, "He that is unable to contain himself, let him have his wife¹," he presently took care to add, "But this I say by way of indulgence, not by way of command." For that which is lawful is not granted by way of indulgence, but because it is just. That therefore which he said he permitted, he showed to be a fault. We must therefore consider with attentive mind, that on Mount Sinai the Lord, when about to speak to the people, first charged the same people to abstain from women; and if there, where the Lord spoke to men by a creature as His representative, purity of body was required with so great care, that those who received the words of God should not have been with

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 2.

women, how much more ought women who receive the body of the omnipotent Lord to maintain in themselves purity of the flesh, lest they be oppressed with the very magnitude of that inestimable mystery. Hence also it is said by the priest to David, concerning his young men, that if they were clean from women they might receive the shew-bread, which they would by no means have received had not David first declared that they were clean from women. Then, moreover, a man who after intercourse with his wife has washed with water, is capable of receiving even the mystery of holy communion, when, according to the pre-determined opinion, it is lawful for him also to enter a church.'

IX. Question of Augustine:—'If after the illusion which is wont to happen in a dream, a man may receive the body of the Lord; or, if he be a priest, celebrate the sacred mysteries?'

Gregory answers: 'The Testament of the Old Law¹, as we have already said in the former article, calls such an one polluted, and does not permit him, unless washed with water, to enter a church until evening; which, however, the spiritual people, understanding otherwise, will receive in the sense which we have spoken of before; because he who is tempted with uncleanness, and is polluted in thought by real images, falls into an illusion, as if in a dream; but he is to be washed with water, that he may cleanse away the faults of his thought with tears, and unless the fire of temptation hath before receded, he may acknowledge himself guilty, as it were, until the evening. But there is

¹ Deut. xxiii. 10, 11.

in the same illusion a very necessary distinction, which ought to be subtly considered, from what circumstance it happens to the mind of the sleeper: for sometimes it so happens from drink, sometimes from the superfluity or weakness of nature, sometimes from thought. And, indeed, when it happens from the superfluity or infirmity of nature, this illusion is not at all to be feared, because it is rather to be lamented that the unconscious mind has suffered this, than that it has done it. When, however, the desire of eating is carried beyond moderation in taking food, and thereby the receptacles of the humours are burdened, the mind has thence some guilt; not however so as to prevent the receiving of the sacred mystery, or the solemn celebration of masses, when, perchance, either a festival day requires it, or necessity itself compels the mystery to be administered, because another priest is not to be found in the place. For if there are others present who can fulfil the ministry, an illusion caused by drink ought not to prevent the receiving of the sacred mystery (but I am of opinion that he ought humbly to abstain from offering the sacrifice of the sacred mystery), provided only that the illusion has not disturbed the mind of the sleeper with a foul imagination. For there are some in whom the illusion for the most part so takes place, that their mind, even during the sleep of the body, is not defiled with foul imaginations. In which case one thing is evident, that the mind itself is guilty, and not even acquitted by its own judgment, since, although it does not remember that it saw anything when the body was asleep, yet it remembers that it fell into the sin of gluttony during the wakefulness of the

body. But if the sleeper's illusion arises from the foul thought of the waker, its own guilt is manifest to the mind; for it sees from what root that pollution proceeded, because that which it contemplated wittingly, it accomplished unwittingly. But it is to be considered whether the thought itself happened by suggestion, or by delectation, or, what is more, by consent of sin. For every sin is completed in three ways—to wit, by suggestion, by delectation, by consent. For indeed suggestion is caused by the devil, delectation by the flesh, consent by the spirit. For also the serpent suggested the first offence; Eve, as the flesh, was pleased; and Adam, as the spirit, consented: and great discretion is necessary that between suggestion and delectation, and between delectation and consent, the mind should preside as its own judge. For when the foul spirit suggests a sin to the mind, if no delectation of the sin follow, the sin is in no way perpetrated; when, however, the flesh begins to be delighted, then sin begins to arise: but if it, moreover, deliberately consent, then sin is known to be accomplished¹. The beginning, therefore, of sin is in suggestion, its nutriment in delectation, its accomplishment in consent. And it often happens that this which the foul spirit sows in thought, the flesh draws into delectation, and yet the soul does not consent to the same delectation. And since the flesh cannot be delighted without the mind, the mind, although struggling against the pleasures of the flesh, is, in some manner, unwillingly bound in carnal delight; so that by its reason it contradicts it, that it should not consent, and yet is bound in delectation, but vehemently laments its

¹ James i. 15.

being bound. Wherefore, also, that chief soldier of the celestial army lamented, saying: "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and leading me captive to the law of sin which is in my members¹." But if he was a captive, he did not fight. But he did fight: wherefore he was a captive, and fought therefore against the law of the mind, against which the law which was in his members fought. But if he fought, he was not a captive. Behold, therefore, man is, so to speak, a captive and free; free by the righteousness which he loves, a captive by the delectation which he bears unwillingly².

CHAPTER XXVIII.

How Pope Gregory sent a letter to the Bishop of Arles, to assist Augustine in the work of God.

THUS far are the answers of the blessed Pope Gregory to the questions of the most reverend prelate Augustine. The letter, however, which he says he had written to the Bishop of Arles, he had directed to Virgilius, the successor of Etherius, of which this was the form:—"To the most reverend and holy brother Virgilius, his fellow-bishop

¹ Rom. vii. 23.

² After noticing this question and answer, Hume says: 'There are some other questions and replies still more indecent and more ridiculous. And, on the whole, it appears that Gregory and his missionary, if sympathy of manners have any influence, were better calculated, than men of more refined understandings, for making a progress with the ignorant and barbarous Saxons.'

Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. How great affection is to be bestowed on brethren coming of their own accord, is known from the fact that they are wont for the most part to be invited for the sake of charity. And therefore, if it shall chance that our common brother Augustine the bishop come to you, let your love receive him with such affection and sweetness as is becoming, in order that it may both refresh him with the good of its consolation, and teach others how brotherly charity should be cultivated. And since it often happens that those who are situated afar off first learn from others what things are to be amended, if perchance he shall bring any charges before you, my brother, against priests or others, you shall, sitting together with him, search out all things with careful investigation, and so manifest yourself earnest and solicitous with respect to those things which offend God and provoke Him to anger, that, for the amendment of others, vengeance may strike the culprit, and false surmise may not afflict the innocent. May God keep you safe, most reverend brother. Given on the tenth day of the Kalends of July ¹, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our master Mauricius Tiberius, the most pious Augustus, in the eighteenth year after the consulate of the same our master, in the fourth indiction ².

¹ June 22.

² A.D. 601.

CHAPTER XXIX.

How he also sent Augustine a pall, and a letter, and more ministers of God.

BESIDES these things, Pope Gregory also sent to Augustine the bishop more co-operators and ministers of the Word, besides his deputies above-mentioned; because he had suggested to him that the harvest there would indeed be great, but the labourers few. Among whom the first and chief were Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Rufinianus¹; and by them he sent all things in general which were necessary for the worship and ministry of the Church—to wit, sacred vessels and altar-cloths, ornaments also of churches, and sacerdotal and clerical vestments; relics also of the holy apostles and martyrs, besides many books. He sent him also a letter, in which he signifies that he had granted the pall to him, and also directs how he ought to constitute bishops in Britain; of which letter this is the text²:—‘To the most reverend and holy brother and co-bishop Augustine, Gregory the servant of the servants of God. Although it is certain that the ineffable rewards of the eternal kingdom are reserved for those who labour for the omnipotent God, it is however necessary for us to render to them the benefits of honours,

¹ ‘Who and what they were, may be guessed by the stuff which they brought with them, vessels and vestments for the altar, copes, relics, and for the Archbishop Austin a pall to say mass in; to such a rank superstition that age was grown, though some of them yet retaining an emulation of apostolic zeal.’ Milton, History of England, Bk. iv.

² Greg Epist. xi. 65.

that from this remuneration they may be able to labour more abundantly in the study of their spiritual work. And because the new Church of the English is brought to the grace of omnipotent God by the bounty of the same Lord and by your labour, we have granted to you the use of the pall in the same, to perform the solemnities of masses only; so that in separate places you may ordain twelve bishops, who may be under your authority, so far as that the bishop of the city of London ought always hereafter to be consecrated by his own synod, and may receive the pall of honour from this holy and apostolical see, which, by the authority of God, I serve. Our will however is, that you send a bishop to the city of York, whom you yourself shall judge fit to ordain; so only, that if the same city shall receive the word of God with the neighbouring places, he himself also may ordain twelve bishops, and enjoy the honour of a metropolitan; because, if our life shall last, we intend, with the favour of God, to grant to him also the pall. Nevertheless, it is our will that he submit to your authority; but, after your decease, he shall so preside over the bishops which he shall have ordained, that in no way he may be under the authority of the bishop of London. Let there be, however, hereafter this distinction of honour between the bishops of the cities of London and York, that he may have the precedence who shall have been first ordained; but whatever things are for the zeal of Christ are to be done by common advice and concordant action. Let them dispose unanimously, let them think rightly, and let them accomplish without disagreement those things which they judge right. But you, my brother, shall have subject to you

not only those bishops whom you shall have ordained, nor those only who shall have been ordained by the bishop of York, but also all the priests of Britain¹, under the authority of God and our Lord Jesus Christ, so that from the mouth and life of your holiness they may receive the form both of right believing and living well; and executing their office in faith and good manners, may attain, when the Lord wills it, to the celestial kingdom. May God keep you safe, most reverend brother. Given on the tenth day before the Kalends of July², in the nineteenth year of the reign of our lord Mauricius Tiberius, the most pious Augustus, in the eighteenth year after the consulship of the same our master, in the fourth indiction.'

CHAPTER XXX.

A copy of the letter which he sent to the Abbot Mellitus, on his going to Britain.

MOREOVER, on the departure of the above-named deputies³, the blessed father Gregory sent after them letters worthy of mention, in which he plainly shows how zealously he watched towards the salvation of our race, writing thus⁴:—

¹ This makes it evident that Gregory claimed supreme spiritual authority in Britain.

² June 22.

³ They set out June 22, A.D. 601, and took with them three letters written by St. Gregory that day, which letters Bede gives in his history. St. Gregory also wrote nine letters of commendation of Laurentius, Mellitus, and their companions, to the princes and bishops of Gaul. Greg. Epist. xi. 54–62.

⁴ Greg. Epist. xi. 76.

‘Gregory, the servant of the servants of God, to my most dearly beloved son, the Abbot Mellitus. After the departure of our congregation which is with you, we were rendered very anxious because it happened that we heard nothing concerning the success of your journey. When, therefore, the omnipotent God shall have brought you to that most reverend man, our brother Bishop Augustine, tell him what I have a long time thought over with myself¹, concerning the case of the English—to wit, that the temples of the idols in that nation ought not to be destroyed; but let the idols themselves that are in them be destroyed. Let water be consecrated, and sprinkled in the same temples; let altars be constructed, relics deposited: because if these temples are well built, they ought of necessity to be converted from the worship of devils to the service of the true God, that whilst this nation sees that its temples are not destroyed, it may put away error from its heart, and acknowledging and adoring the true God, may the more familiarly meet at its accustomed places. And because they are wont to kill many oxen in sacrifice to devils, some solemnity ought to be specially appointed for them on this account, as, that on the day of the dedication², or on the birthdays of holy martyrs whose relics are there deposited, they may make

¹ Gregory had written to King Ædilberct, to urge him to be zealous in extirpating idolatry; but fearing lest he had been too urgent with him, he sent another letter to Mellitus, who was on his journey. The letter to Ædilberct, which Bede gives in Chap. xxxii. ought therefore to come before this.

² This was probably the origin of the wakes, feasts, and fairs in England, which usually coincide, according to the Old Style, with the day of the patron saint, or of the saint to whom the parish church is dedicated.

for themselves huts of the boughs of trees, around the same churches which have been altered from temples, and celebrate a solemnity with religious feasting, and no longer immolate animals to the devil, but kill them for their own eating, to the praise of God, and return thanks for their satiety to the Giver of all things; to the end that, whilst some outward joys are reserved for them, they may more easily be able to consent to inward joys. For, without doubt, it is impossible to cut off all things at once from their rough minds, because also he who endeavours to ascend to the highest place, is elevated by steps or paces and not by leaps. So, indeed, the Lord made Himself known to the Israelitish people¹, in Egypt, but reserved to them, in His own service, the use of the sacrifices which they were wont to offer to the devil, and charged them to immolate animals in His sacrifice, to the end that, changing their hearts, they might let go one thing with respect to the sacrifice and retain another; so that although they were the same animals as they were wont to offer, yet being immolated to God and not to idols, they were no longer the same sacrifices. These things therefore it is necessary that you, well-beloved, should yourself say to the aforesaid brother, that he at present being there placed, may consider how he ought to order all things. May God keep you safe, most dearly-beloved son. Given on the fifteenth day of the Kalends of July², in the nineteenth year of the reign of our

¹ Lev. xvii.

² June 17, A.D. 601. There is an error here in the day of the month. Mellitus departed June 22; and the true date of this letter must have been some little time after this, as Gregory says in it that he had been expecting intelligence of Mellitus.

lord Mauricius Tiberius, the most pious Augustus, in the eighteenth year after the consulship of the same our lord, in the fourteenth indiction.'

CHAPTER XXXI.

How he exhorted Augustine by a letter that he should not glory concerning his miracles.

AT which time he sent also a letter to Augustine, respecting the miracles which he had understood were wrought by him, in which he exhorts him not to incur the danger of being elated through their abundance, in these words :—' I know, dearest brother, that omnipotent God by you, dearly-beloved, shows great miracles in the nation which He has willed should be chosen. Wherefore it is necessary that you should rejoice with fear, and fear with rejoicing, concerning the same celestial gift. You may rejoice, to wit, because the minds of the English are drawn by the more outward miracles to the more inward grace ; you may fear, however, lest among the wonders that are done, the infirm mind, in its presumption, may elevate itself, and whereby it is outwardly raised to honour, may thereby, through vainglory, inwardly fall. For indeed we ought to remember, that when the disciples, returning with joy from preaching, said to their heavenly Master, " Lord, in Thy name, even the devils are subject to us¹," they immediately heard in reply, " Rejoice not on this account, but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven." For they who rejoiced on

¹ Luke x. 17.

account of miracles, had set their minds on a private and temporal joy; but they are recalled from a private to a common, and from a temporal to an eternal joy; to whom it is said, "In this rejoice, because your names are written in heaven¹." For not all the elect work miracles, but yet the names of all these are kept written in heaven. For indeed the disciples of the truth ought not to have a joy unless concerning that good thing which they have in common with all, and in which they have joy without end. It remains, therefore, dearest brother, that in respect to those things which, with the assistance of God, you do more outwardly, you always strictly judge yourself inwardly, and understand clearly both what you are yourself, and how great grace there is in the same nation for whose conversion you have received even the gift of working miracles. And if you remember at any time to have offended against our Creator, either by tongue or by deeds, always recall these things to your memory, in order that the remembrance of guilt may repress the rising boast of the heart. And whatsoever you shall receive or have received with regard to working miracles, think that these things are not given for you, but to them for whose salvation they are conferred upon you.'

CHAPTER XXXII.

How he sent a letter and gifts to King Ædilberct.

THE blessed Pope Gregory also, at the same time, sent a letter to King Ædilberct, and with it many gifts of divers

¹ Luke x. 20.

kinds, being desirous to glorify the king with temporal honours, while he rejoiced that the knowledge of celestial glory had come to him by his own labour and zeal. This, moreover, is a copy of the said letter¹. 'Gregory, bishop, to the most glorious lord and his most excellent son Ædilberct, king of the Angles. Omnipotent God advances good men to the government of peoples in order that through them He may bestow the gifts of His goodness on all over whom they are set. This we understand to have taken place in the nation of the Angles, over which your majesty was placed, to the intent that by the good things which are granted you, heavenly benefits might be bestowed on the nation that is subject to you. And therefore, most glorious son, keep with careful mind that grace which you have divinely received; hasten to extend the Christian faith among the peoples subject to you; multiply the zeal of your uprightness in their conversion; suppress the worship of their idols; overthrow the buildings of their temples; edify the manners of your subjects by great purity of life, by exhorting, terrifying, soothing, correcting, and by showing examples of good works; that you may find Him your rewarder in heaven, whose name and knowledge you shall have spread abroad upon earth. For He also will render the name of your majesty more glorious to posterity, whose honour you seek and preserve among the nations. And thus, indeed, Constantine formerly, the most pious emperor, recalling the Roman republic from the perverse worship of idols, subjected himself to omnipotent God, our Lord Jesus Christ, and turned himself with the peoples subject to him, with all

¹ Greg. Epist. xi. 66.

his mind, to Him. Whence it came to pass, that this man surpassed in his praises the name of ancient princes, and excelled his predecessors as much in reputation as in good deeds. And now therefore let your majesty hasten to instil the knowledge of one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, into kings and peoples subject to them, that you may excel the ancient kings of your nation in praises and merits; and the more you wipe away the sins of others among your subjects, the more may you become secure concerning your own sins before the terrible judgement of omnipotent God. Harken to, devoutly perform, carefully keep in memory, whatever our most reverend brother Bishop Augustine advises you, who is instructed in the monastic rule, filled with the knowledge of Holy Scripture, and, by the help of God, gifted with good works; because, if you hear him in that which he speaks for the omnipotent Lord, the same omnipotent Lord will more readily hear him when he prays for you. But if (which God forbid) you reject his words, how shall the omnipotent Lord hear him for you, whom you neglect to hear for God? With your whole mind, therefore, bend yourself to him with fervour of faith, and assist his efforts by the virtue which God has given you, that He may make you to be partakers of His kingdom, whose faith you make to be received and kept in your kingdom.

‘ Besides, we would have your majesty know that, as we find in Sacred Scripture from the words of the omnipotent Lord, the end of the present world is already at hand, and that the kingdom of the saints is about to come, which can never be terminated by any end. Moreover, on the approach

of this same end of the world, many things impend which were not before—to wit, changes of the air, and terrors from heaven, and storms contrary to the order of the times, wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes in divers places; which, however, are not all about to come in our days, but after our days all shall follow. If therefore you perceive any of these things happen in your land, in no wise trouble your mind, for these signs of the end of the world are sent before in order that we might be solicitous about our souls, in expectation of the hour of death, and be found by the Judge about to come to be prepared in good works. These things now, glorious son, I have said in few words, to the end that, when the Christian faith has increased in your kingdom, our speech also may increase more widely among you; and it may please us to say so much the more, according as the joys concerning the perfect conversion of your nation multiply themselves in our mind.

‘Moreover, I have sent some small gifts of friendship, which will not be small in your estimation, when they are received by you with the benediction of the blessed apostle St. Peter. May, therefore, omnipotent God perfect in you His grace which He has begun, and both prolong your life here through the course of many years, and after long time receive you in the congregation of the heavenly country. May Divine grace, my lord and son, keep your excellency safe. Given on the tenth day of the Kalends of July, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our lord, Mauricius Tiberius, the most pious Augustus, in the eighteenth year after the consulate of the same, in the fourth indiction¹.’

¹ Gregory sent a letter at the same time to Queen Bertha.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

How Augustine restored the church of the Saviour, and built the monastery of the blessed apostle Peter¹; and concerning its first abbot Peter.

BUT Augustine, when he received an episcopal see, as I before said, in the royal city, recovered in it, being supported by the king's assistance, a church which he learnt had been there built by the ancient work of the Roman believers, and consecrated it in the name of the holy Saviour God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and there established a residence for himself and all his successors. He built also a monastery not far from the same city, towards the east, in which, by his advice, Ædilberct built from the foundations the church of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and enriched it with divers gifts; in which also the bodies of Augustine himself, of all the bishops of Canterbury, and likewise of all the kings of Kent, might be buried. Which church, however, not Augustine himself, but his successor Laurentius, consecrated. Moreover, the first abbot of the same monastery was the presbyter Peter, who, being sent on a mission to Gaul, was drowned in the gulf of the sea which is called Amfleet², and committed by the inhabitants of the place to an ignoble sepulture; but omnipotent God, in order to show of what merit the man was, appeared every night as a celestial light above his sepulchre, until the neighbours who remarked it, perceiving that it was a holy man who was there buried, and inquiring

¹ Ædilberct's charter for founding the monastery bears date, A.D. 605.

² Now Ambleteuse.

from whence and who he was, took away the body, and buried it in the church in the city of Bononia, with the honour due to so great a man.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

How Ædilfrid, king of the Northumbrians, defeating the nations of Scots in a battle, drove them from the territories of the Angles.

AT this time, Ædilfrid, a most brave king, and ambitious of glory, ruled over the kingdom of the Northumbrians, and more than all the chieftains of the Angles, ravaged the nation of the Britons, so that he appeared comparable to Saul, anciently king of the Israelitish race, excepting only in this, that he was ignorant of Divine religion. For no one among the leaders, no one among the kings, made more of their lands to be either tributary to, or to be inhabited by, the nation of Angles, by exterminating or subjugating the natives. To him might justly be applied that which the patriarch, when blessing his son, spake concerning the person of Saul, 'Benjamin is a rapacious wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and in the evening he shall divide the spoil¹.' Whereupon, Ædan², king of the Scots who inhabit Britain, being aroused by his progress, came against him with an immense and brave army; but, being overcome, fled away with few, since almost all his army was

¹ Gen. xlix. 27.

² Aodhan Mac Gabhrain, great-grandson of Fergus Mac Erc or Eric, began to reign A.D. 558, and died A.D. 607. Ann. Cambr. pp. 4, 6.

cut to pieces at that most celebrated place which is called Degsastan¹, that is, 'the stone of Degsa.' In which battle also Theobald, the brother of Ædilfrid, with all that army which he himself led, was slain; which war, to wit, Ædilfrid brought to an end in the year from the Lord's incarnation 603, and in the eleventh year of his own reign, which lasted twenty-four years, and in the first year of Focas, who then governed the Roman empire. From that time, none of the kings of the Scots² in Britain durst come against the nation of the Angles to battle unto this day.

¹ Now either Dalston near Carlisle, or Dawston near Jedburgh.

² Fordun, iii. 31, says that Eugenius the son of Aidan succeeded A.D. 606, and that he 'regiones Saxonum, aliquandoque Pictorum gravibus irruptionibus infestasse.' The Saxon Chronicle, A.D. 603, says: 'Her Ægthan Scotta cyng feaht with Dælreoda and with Æthelferthe Northhymbræ cyng.'

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

Concerning the death of the blessed pope Gregory.

AT this time, that is, in the year of the Lord's incarnation 605¹, the blessed pope Gregory, after he had most gloriously ruled the see of the Roman and apostolical Church thirteen years, six months, and ten days, died, and was translated to the eternal see of the heavenly kingdom. Concerning whom it is fitting that I discourse more largely in my Ecclesiastical History, because by his own zeal he converted our, that is, the nation of the Angles, from the power of Satan to the faith of Christ, and him we may and should rightly call our apostle. Because, when he held the first pontificate in the whole world, and presided over Churches long ago converted to the true faith, he made our nation, which up to that time was the thrall of idols, a Church of Christ, so that we may be allowed to quote, with reference to him, that apostolic saying², that, although to others he is not an apostle, yet to us he is, for we are the signs of his apostleship in the Lord.

He was, moreover, by nation a Roman, of a father called

¹ In the eighth indiction. Gregory died March 12, A.D. 605. He was made pope A.D. 591.

² 1 Cor. ix. 2.

Gordian, deducing from his ancestors a descent not only noble, but religious also. Felix¹, anciently bishop of the same apostolic see, a man of great glory in Christ and in the Church, was his great-grandfather², and he himself exercised the nobility of religion with no less virtue of devotion than his parents and kindred. But that nobility which he seemed to have in regard to the world, he used entirely to gain, by the gift of divine grace, the glory of that dignity which is above. For having suddenly changed his secular habit, he sought out a monastery³, in which he began to have his conversation with so great grace of perfection, that, as he himself was wont afterwards to testify with tears, all transitory things were subject to his mind, that he was superior to all things which are mutable, that he was accustomed to think of nothing but celestial things, that even while detained in the body, he already passed by contemplation beyond the bars of the flesh, that he loved even death, which to almost all is a punishment—to wit, as an entrance to life, and the reward of his labour. This, moreover, he was wont to relate concerning himself, not by way of boasting of his advance in virtues, but rather as bewailing the loss which he thought he had incurred by the pastoral charge. In short, when he was one day conversing privately with Peter, his deacon, after having enumerated the former virtues of his mind, he with grief

¹ Either the third or the fourth of that name.

² Or merely 'ancestor.'

³ Gregory built six monasteries in Sicily, besides that of St. Andrew the Apostle, near the church of St. John and St. Paul, on the hill of Scaurus, at Rome, where he himself lived as a monk. The rest of his property he sold and gave to the poor.

added: 'But now, by reason of the pastoral charge, it has to endure the business of worldly men, and after so fair an appearance of its quietude, it is defiled with the dust of earthly action, and when it has distracted itself with outward objects by descending to many things, even when it seeks inward things, it returns to them, without doubt, deteriorated. I weigh therefore what I endure, I weigh what I have lost, and whilst I behold that which I have lost, this which I bear becomes more burdensome.' These things, indeed, the holy man said from the great stress of his humility; but it becomes us to believe that he lost nothing of monastic perfection by the pastoral charge; yea rather, that he then made a better advance through the labour of the conversion of many, than he had before made from the quietude of his own conversation; and chiefly because, even when discharging the pontifical functions, he took care to make his house a monastery. And, when first drawn forth from the monastery he was ordained to the ministry of the altar, and sent¹ as commissary² from the apostolic see to Constantinople, although he had his conversation in an earthly palace, he did not intermit his purpose of leading a heavenly life. For certain of the brethren of his monastery having followed him, on account of brotherly charity, to the royal city, he kept them with him for the preservation of regular observances—to wit, that by their example, as he himself writes, he might continually be bound, as by the cable of an anchor, to the quiet shore of prayer, when he was being tossed about with the incessant

¹ By Pope Pelagius II. to Tiberius Constantinus, A.D. 583. He remained at Constantinople until A.D. 586.

² apocrisiarius.

impulse of worldly affairs, and might strengthen his mind, when it was shaken by the concerns of the world, daily among them by the communion of studious reading. By their company, not only was he guarded from earthly assaults, but was even more and more inflamed in the exercises of a heavenly life. For they exhorted him to expound by mystical interpretation the book of holy Job¹, which is involved in great obscurities; nor could he refuse the work which brotherly love imposed on him for the future benefit of many; but in a wonderful manner, in five-and-thirty books of exposition, he thoroughly taught concerning the same book, how it is to be understood literally, how it is to be referred to the sacraments of Christ and the Church, and in what sense it is to be adapted to each individual believer. This work, indeed, he began when he was a commissary in the royal city, but when he finished it at Rome, he had been made pope. When he was still abiding in the royal city, he crushed there, by the assistance of the grace of Catholic truth, at its very beginning, a newly-risen heresy concerning the state of our resurrection. For Eutychius, bishop of the same city, taught that our body, in the glory of that resurrection, would be impalpable and finer than the winds and air; which he hearing, proved both by the reason of truth, and by the example of the Lord's resurrection, that this doctrine was every way contrary to the orthodox faith. For the Catholic faith holds that our body, when sublimed by that glory of

¹ Paulus Diaconus says that it was undertaken chiefly at the suggestion of Leander, Archbishop of Spain, who was at that time on an embassy at Constantinople for the Visigoths. Mabill. Acta. SS. i. 371.

immortality, is indeed subtle by the effect of spiritual power, but palpable by the verity of its nature; according to the example of the Lord's body, concerning which, when raised from the dead, He Himself said to His disciples, 'Handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have¹.' In the assertion of which faith, the venerable father Gregory so intently laboured against the newly-risen heresy, and crushed it with so great instancy, by the assistance also of the most pious emperor Tiberius Constantinus, that none thenceforth were found to revive it. He also composed another excellent book, which is called 'The Pastoral,' in which he made evident by manifest light what kind of persons ought to be appointed for the government of the Church, in what manner the rulers themselves ought to live, with what discretion they ought to instruct each one of their hearers, and with how great consideration they ought daily to reflect on their own frailty. Moreover, he composed Homilies on the Gospel, forty in number, which he divided into two books of equal size. He also composed four books of Dialogues, in which, at the request of Peter, his deacon, he collected, for an example of living to posterity, the virtues of such saints in Italy as he had either known or heard were most illustrious; that, as in the books of his Expositions, he taught what virtues we ought to labour for, so also in describing the miracles of the saints, he might show what was the brightness of the same virtues. Also, as regards the first and last parts of the prophet Ezekiel, which seemed to be rather obscure, he demonstrated in two-and-twenty homilies how

¹ Luke xxiv. 39.

much light they have within them. Besides, there is his 'Book of Replies,' which he wrote in answer to the questions of the holy Augustine, first bishop of the nation of the Angles, as also I have above shown, inserting the whole of that book in this history; besides also the most useful 'Synodical Book'¹ which he composed for the bishops of Italy on necessary matters of the Church, besides private letters to certain persons. And it is the more wonderful that he was able to compose so many and so great volumes, in regard that during almost all the time of his youth, to use his own words, he was tormented with constant internal pains; every hour and moment he was depressed in consequence of the strength of his stomach being weakened: he also suffered from continual slow fever. But in the midst of these things, whilst he carefully considered that which Scripture witnesseth, 'every son who is received, is chastised²,' the more severely that he was depressed by present evils, the more surely he took comfort from the anticipation of eternity.

Let thus much then be said concerning his immortal genius, which could not be quenched even by so great bodily pain. For other pontiffs, indeed, laboured in building churches and ornamenting them with gold and silver; but he was entirely employed in gaining souls. Whatever money he had he diligently took care to distribute and give to the poor, that his righteousness might remain for ever and ever, and his horn might be exalted in glory; so that he might truly say, as the blessed Job did³, 'The

¹ It was the custom of the popes, on entering on their office, to address what were called 'synodical letters' to the bishops subject to their authority.

² Prov. iii. 12.

³ Job xxix. 11; xxxi. 16.

ear hearing me, blessed me, and the eye seeing me gave testimony unto me, that I had freed the poor when he cried, and the fatherless¹ who had no helper. The blessing of him who was about to perish came upon me, and I consoled the heart of the widow. I put on justice, and it clothed me with my judgment as with a robe and diadem. I was an eye to the blind, and a foot to the lame. I was the father of the poor, and the cause which I knew not, I most diligently investigated. I brake the jaws of the unjust, and took away the prey from his teeth.' And a little after: 'If I denied the poor what they wished, and made the eyes of the widow to wait; if I ate my morsel alone, and the fatherless ate not of it; (for from my infancy my compassion grew with me, and came forth with me from the womb of my mother.)' To the work of whose piety and justice this also belongs, that he made our nation partakers of eternal liberty, snatching it from the teeth of the ancient enemy, by the preachers which he sent hither. Rejoicing in its faith and salvation, and commending it with worthy praise, he himself said in his Exposition of blessed Job²: 'Behold the tongue of Britain, which knew nought else but to rave barbarously, hath long since begun to sound the Hebrew Alleluia in Divine praises. Behold the once-swelling ocean now becalmed serves at the feet of the saints, and its barbarous motions, which earthly princes could not subdue with the sword, these, through Divine dread, the mouths of priests restrain with simple words; and that nation which, when infidel, feared not at all the bands of combatants, now believing, fears the tongues

¹ pupillum.

² Lib. xxvii. 11.

of the humble. Because, the celestial words having been received, and miracles also becoming manifest, the virtue of Divine knowledge is infused into it, and it is restrained by dread of the same Divinity, so as to fear to do evil, and to long with all its desires to come to eternal glory.' In which words the blessed Gregory declares this also, that St. Augustine and his companions, not only by preaching of the Word, but by the showing of celestial wonders as well, brought the nation of the English to the knowledge of the truth. The blessed pope Gregory caused, among other things, that in the churches of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, masses should be celebrated over their bodies; and in the celebration itself of masses, he added three sentences full of the greatest perfection¹: 'And order our days in Thy peace, and grant us to be saved from eternal damnation, and to be numbered in the flock of Thine elect.' Moreover, he governed the Church in the times of the emperors Mauricius and Focas. But in the second year of the same Focas, passing out of this life, he migrated to the true life which is in the heavens. He was however buried, as regards his body, in the church of the blessed apostle Peter, before the consistory², on the fourth day of the Ides of March,³ at some future time to arise in that body with glory, together with the rest of the pastors of the holy Church; and his epitaph was written in this wise on his tomb⁴:—

¹ J. Diaconus, lib. ii. § 17. Pope Gelasius revised the old service-book; Gregory revised the service-book of Gelasius.

² *secretarium*, 'sacristy' (Stevenson); 'consistory' (Andrews).

³ March 12.

⁴ J. Diaconus, Vit. iv. 68.

‘Take, Earth, this body, from thy dust derived,
The which thou may'st restore, by Christ revived.
Soul, seek the stars! Death hath no evil doom
For him whose way to new life is the tomb.
Within this grave a pontiff's ashes lie,
Who in his good deeds lives immortally.
He fed the hungry, clothed the naked poor,
Guarded from Satan souls by holy lore;
Fulfill'd in action what his tongue rehearsed,
No less a pattern than in mysteries versed.
He brought the Angles under Christ's commands,
From a new nation winning faithful bands.
This, shepherd, was thy labour, study, care;
That the Lord's flock might gain an increase fair.
Rejoice in triumphs such as these, in heaven,
Now that thy work's reward to thee is given.’

Nor is the story concerning the blessed Gregory, which has been handed down to us by the tradition of our ancestors, to be passed over in silence—to wit, by what cause being influenced, he had so sedulous a care for the salvation of our nation. They say that on a certain day, when, some merchants having lately arrived, many things were collected in the market-place for sale, and many persons had come together to buy, Gregory himself came among the rest, and saw, among other things, some boys put up for sale, of a white body and fair countenance, and also with hair of remarkable beauty. Whom when he beheld, he asked, as they say, from what region or land they were brought. And it was said that they were brought from the island of Britain, whose inhabitants were of such an aspect. Again he asked whether these same islanders were Christians, or still entangled in the errors of paganism; and it was said that they were

pagans. Then he, drawing deep sighs from the bottom of his heart, said, 'Alas, for grief! that the author of darkness possesses men of so bright countenance, and that so great grace of aspect bears a mind void of inward grace.' Then again he asked what was the name of that nation. It was answered, that they were called Angles. 'It is well,' he said; 'for they have an angelic¹ face besides, and such it befits to be the co-heirs of angels in heaven.' 'What name has that province from which they are brought?' It was answered, that the people of that province were called Deiri. 'Well,' he said, 'Deiri, withdrawn from anger², and called to the mercy of Christ.' 'How is the king of that province called?' It was answered, that he was called Ælla³; then he, alluding to the name, said, 'Alleluia! it behoves that the praise of God the Creator should be sung in those parts.' And going to the pontiff⁴ of the Roman and apostolic see (for he was not himself as yet made pontiff) he asked him to send some ministers of the Word into Britain to the nation of the Angles, by whom it might be converted to Christ, saying that he himself was ready to accomplish this work, with the co-operation of the Lord, if the apostolic pope thought fit that it should be done. Which, at that time, he was not able to accomplish, because, although the

¹ Huic traditioni fidem aliquam addit quod cum ipse Gregorius ad Anglos convertendos iter ingressus esset, revocatus fuit accessu locustæ, cujus nomen suggestit loco standum esse.' (Smith). For the story, see J. Diaconus, lib. i. 21.

² de ira.

³ This Ælla began to reign A.D. 559 (Florent. Vigorn.) or 560 (Chron. Sax.). He reigned thirty years. (Smith.)

⁴ Pelagius, according to P. Diaconus; Benedict, the predecessor of Pelagius, according to J. Diaconus.

pontiff was willing to grant him his request, the citizens of Rome could not be induced to consent that he should go so far from the city. Afterwards, when he himself discharged the office of the pontificate, he accomplished the long-desired work, sending, indeed, other preachers, but himself assisting with his exhortations and prayers, in order that he might make the preaching successful. These things, according to the account which we have received from the ancients, I have thought fit to insert in my Ecclesiastical History.

CHAPTER II.

How Augustine exhorted the bishops of the Britons to catholic peace, and wrought a heavenly miracle in their presence; and what vengeance followed them for despising him.

IN the meantime, Augustine, with the assistance of King Ædiberct, called to his conference the bishops or doctors of the neighbouring province of the Britons¹, in the place which even to this day is called, in the tongue of the Angles, 'Augustinæac,' that is, 'Augustine's Oak²,' on the confines of the Huiccii³ and West Saxons, and began to persuade them by brotherly

¹ Spelman places this synod in the year 601; Sigeberct, in 602; Matthew of Westminster, in 603. The battle at Degsastan was fought A.D. 603. b
Bede places the synod after this battle.

² Probably Aust-clive, Gloucestershire, where is a ferry across the Severn.

³ The Hwicci inhabited the part of Gloucestershire to the east of the Severn; Worcestershire, except the north-western part beyond the Teme; and the southern half of Warwickshire. Camden, ii. 474.

admonition that keeping catholic peace with him, they should undertake in common the work of evangelizing the nations for the Lord. For they did not keep the Sunday of the Passover at its proper time, but from the fourteenth to the twentieth day of the moon ; which computation is contained in a cycle of eighty-four years. Moreover, they did many other things contrary to ecclesiastical unity. When, after a long disputation had been held, they were neither willing to give assent to the entreaties, nor the exhortations, nor yet to the rebukes of Augustine and his companions, but rather preferred their own traditions to the universal practice of Churches which agree together in Christ throughout the world, the holy father Augustine made an end of this laborious and long contest, by saying, ‘ Let us beseech God, who makes men to dwell of one mind in His Father’s house, that He Himself will deign to inform us by celestial signs what tradition is to be followed, and in what ways we must hasten to enter into His kingdom. Let some afflicted person be brought, and let the faith and work of him by whose prayers he shall be healed, be believed to be acceptable to God, and such as ought to be followed by all.’ To this when his adversaries consented, although unwillingly, a certain one of the nation of the Angles was brought, who had been deprived of sight, and, when he was presented to the priests of the Britons, he derived no cure or healing by their ministry. At last Augustine, compelled by just necessity, bends his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying that He would restore that sight to the blind which he had lost, and by the bodily enlightening of one man, kindle the grace of spiritual light in the hearts

of very many believers. Without delay the blind man is enlightened, and Augustine is proclaimed by all the true herald of the highest light. Then the Britons confess, indeed, that they perceive that what Augustine preached was the true way of righteousness, but that they could not, without the consent and leave of their own people, disown their former customs. They therefore demanded that a synod should be held a second time, with more persons attending. When this was appointed, there came, as they say, seven bishops¹ of the Britons, and many very learned men, chiefly from that most noble monastery of theirs which is called in the tongue of the Angles Bancornaburg², over which, at that time, the abbot Dinoot is said to have presided; and they, when about to go to the aforesaid council, went first to a certain holy and prudent man, who was wont to lead an anchoritic life among them, to consult him whether they ought to desert their traditions at the preaching of Augustine. He answered: 'If he be a man of God, follow him.' They said, 'And how can we ascertain this?' Then he replied, 'The Lord saith, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart"³.' If therefore this Augustine is meek and lowly in heart, it is credible that both he himself bears the yoke of Christ, and offers it to you to bear; but if he is stern and proud, it is evident that he is not of God, and that his discourse ought not to be regarded by us.' And they again

¹ Perhaps five of these were the bishops of Menevia or St. David's, Llandaff, Llanbadarn, Bangor, and St. Asaph.

² Bangor, on the river Dee, near Chester, commonly called Bangor-ys-y-coed, i.e. 'below the wood,' to distinguish it from Bangor by the Menai, or Meneu, Straits, the episcopal see.

³ Matt. xi. 29.

said, 'And how can we discern even this?' 'Contrive,' said he, 'that he and his people may come first to the place of the synod; and if, at your approach, he rise up to you, hear him with submission, knowing that he is a servant of Christ; but if he slight you, and will not rise up in your presence, when you are more in number, let him also be disregarded by you.' They did as he said; and it happened that when they came, Augustine was sitting in a chair; which they seeing, presently became angry, and stigmatizing him with pride, endeavoured to contradict all that he said. He, however, said to them: 'Seeing that in many things you act contrary to our custom, yea, to the custom of the universal Church; yet, nevertheless, if in these three things you are willing to be ruled by me,—to keep Easter at its proper time; to fulfil the ministration of baptizing, by which we are born again to God, according to the manner of the holy Roman and apostolic Church; to preach the Word of the Lord together with us to the nation of the Angles; all the rest that ye do, although contrary to our customs, we will tolerate with equanimity.' But they replied¹ that they would do none of these things, nor have him for an archbishop, alleging to one another that 'if he would not rise up to us just now, how much more, if we begin to be subject to him, will he then condemn us, as of no account?' To whom the man of the Lord, Augustine, is said to have threateningly predicted, that if they would not

¹ Wilkins, *Concil. Mag. Brit.* i. p. 26, purports to give the reply made to Augustine by the abbot of Bangor, who speaks of the bishop of Caerleon as being the primate of the British Church. Its genuineness is doubtful, especially since it appears that the British primate was, at that time, the Bishop of St. David's. *Girald. Cambr. Itinerar.* i. 5, *Descript.* 4.

receive peace with their brethren, they should receive war from their enemies; and if they would not preach the way of life to the nation of the Angles, they should suffer, at their hands, the vengeance of death. Which was in all respects so accomplished, by the agency of Divine judgement, as he had foretold. Forasmuch as, after this, the king of the Angles himself, of whom I have spoken, the most valiant Ædilfrid, having collected a great army at Civitas Legionum, which is called by the nation of the Angles Legacæstir, but more rightly by the Britons Carlegion¹, inflicted a very great defeat on the perfidious nation. And when being about to engage he saw their priests, who had assembled to entreat God for the soldiery engaged in conflict, standing apart in a more secure place, he enquired who these were, and what they were there assembled to do. Moreover, very many of them were of the monastery of Bangor, in which the number of monks is said to have been so great, that when the monastery was divided into seven parts, with a ruler set over each, none of these parts contained less than three hundred men, who were all accustomed to live by the labour of their hands. Very many of these therefore, having kept a three days' fast, came with others to pray, at the aforesaid battle, having a defender named Brocmail, to protect them, whilst engaged in prayer, from the swords of the barbarians. When King Ædilfrid had learnt the reason of their coming, he said, 'Then if they cry against us to their God, assuredly they themselves also, although they bear not arms, fight against us by attacking us with adverse imprecations.' Therefore he commands the

¹ On the Dee, and commonly called Westchester.

attack to be made against them first, and so destroyed the rest of the forces of the impious soldiery, not without great loss to his own army. They relate that about twelve hundred of those who came to pray were killed in this battle, and that only fifty escaped by flight. Brocmail¹, at the first approach of the enemy, taking flight with his troops, left those whom he ought to have defended, unarmed and exposed to the smiting swords. And thus the presage of the holy pontiff Augustine was fulfilled, although he himself had now been long since removed to the heavenly kingdom, that the perfidious people should feel the vengeance of even temporal destruction, because they had despised the counsels offered to them of eternal salvation.

CHAPTER III.

How he also made Mellitus and Justus bishops; and concerning his death.

IN the year of the Lord's incarnation 604, Augustine, archbishop of Britain, ordained two bishops — to wit, Mellitus and Justus; Mellitus, indeed, to preach to the East Saxons, who are separated from Kent by the river Thames, and are themselves contiguous to the eastern sea, whose metropolis is the city of London², situate on the

¹ Or Brocmael Ysygthrog, son of Conan, and prince of Powys. He married a sister of Dinoot, or Dunawd, founder and first abbot of the abbey of Bangor. He, Cadvan of Gwynedd, Morgan of Demetia, and Blederic of Cornwall, commanded the Britons. He died A.D. 662. Ann. Cambr.

² 'Cognomento quidem coloniz non insigne, sed copia negotiatorum et commeatum maxime celebre.' Tacitus Ann. xiv. 33 (A.D. 61).

bank of the aforesaid river, and itself the emporium of many peoples coming by land and by sea; in which nation, to wit, at that time Saberct, the nephew of Ædilberct, by his sister Ricula, reigned, although placed under the power of the same Ædilberct, who governed, as was before said, all the nations of the Angles as far as the boundary of the river Humber. When, however, this province also received the word of truth at the preaching of Mellitus, King Ædilberct built in the city of London the church of the holy apostle Paul, in which he and his successors might have the place of their episcopal see. Augustine, however, ordained Justus bishop in Kent itself, in the city of Doru-brevis¹, which the nation of the Angles call Hrofæscæstræ², from one who was formerly a chief man in it, named Hrof. It is, moreover, distant from the city of Canterbury about twenty-four miles to the west, in which King Ædilberct built the church of the blessed apostle Andrew; and he also bestowed many gifts on the bishops of each of these churches, as also on the bishop of the church of Canterbury. And yet further, he added territories and possessions for the use of those who were with the bishops.

Moreover, the father Augustine, beloved of God, died³,

¹ Called Durobrovis in the Itinerarium of Antoninus.

² Rochester.

³ Bede does not give the year of Augustine's death. Since Augustine ordained Mellitus and Justus (ii. 5) A.D. 604, and Mellitus brought letters from Rome from Pope Boniface to the archbishop Laurentius, in the eighth year of Phocas, in the thirteenth indiction, which was A.D. 610, Augustine must have died in the interval. The chronicle of the monastery of St. Augustine (probably written by T. Helmham) states that Gregory and Augustine both died in the same year, viz. A.D. 605; the former on Saturday, March 12: the latter on Thursday, May 26.

and his body was buried in the open ground, close by the church of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, of which I have before made mention ; because it was not, at that time, either finished or consecrated ¹. Afterwards, however, when it was consecrated, the body was brought within, and becomingly buried ² in the north porch of it ; in which also the bodies of all the succeeding archbishops are interred, except two only, that is, Theodore and Berctuald, whose bodies were laid in the church itself, because the aforesaid porch could not contain more. This church has, almost in the middle of it, an altar dedicated to the honour ³ of the blessed pope Gregory, in which, every Saturday, their services ⁴ are solemnly performed by the priest of that place. Moreover, this epitaph is inscribed on the tomb of the same Augustine :—‘ Here rests Augustine, first lord archbishop of Canterbury, who, formerly directed hither by the blessed Gregory, pontiff of the city of Rome, and sustained by God in the working of miracles, brought over King Ædilberct and his nation from the worship of idols to the faith of Christ, and having completed the days of his office in peace, deceased on the seventh day of the Kalends of June, in the same king’s reign.’

¹ It was consecrated A.D. 613. Thorn, p. 1767.

² The same year, Thorn.

³ ‘in honore,’ instead of ‘in honorem.’ This use is common in medieval Latin.

⁴ ‘agendæ’ (sometimes ‘agenda,’ neut.) i. e. ‘officium divinum.’

CHAPTER IV.

How Laurentius, with his fellow-bishops, advised the Scots to follow the unity of holy Church, and especially in keeping Easter; and how Mellitus went to Rome.

AUGUSTINE was succeeded in the bishopric by Laurentius, whom he for that reason had ordained whilst he was yet alive, lest on his decease, the state of the Church being so unformed, it might begin to totter if left destitute of a pastor even for an hour. In which he followed also the example of the first pastor of the Church, that is, the most blessed chief of the apostles, Peter, who when the Church of Christ was founded at Rome, is said to have consecrated Clement to be his assistant in preaching the Gospel, and also his successor. Laurentius having obtained the rank of archbishop took care most strenuously to augment the foundation of the Church, which he saw nobly laid, and by the frequent voice of holy exhortation and by continual examples of pious works, to promote it to the proficiency of the height due to it. In short, he not only took charge of the new Church which was collected of the Angles, but also took care to bestow his pastoral solicitude on the peoples of the old inhabitants of Britain, and of the Scots who inhabit the island of Ireland next to Britain. For when he found the manner of life and profession of the Scots in their aforesaid country, as of the Britons also in Britain itself, to be in many respects too little in conformity to the Church, chiefly because they did not celebrate the solemnity of Easter at the proper time, but, as I have before observed, thought that the day

of the Lord's resurrection was to be kept from the fourteenth day of the moon unto the twentieth, he wrote, with his fellow-bishops, an epistle of exhortation to them, entreating and conjuring them to preserve the unity of peace and of catholic observance with that Church of Christ which was spread throughout the whole world, the beginning of which epistle, to wit, is this :—' To our most beloved brothers, the lord bishops and abbots throughout all Scotland, Laurentius, Mellitus, and Justus, bishops, servants of the servants of God. When the apostolic see, according to its custom, throughout the whole globe of the earth, sent us to preach to the pagan nations in these western parts, it happened that we also came into this island, which is called Britain, before we were well acquainted with the state of it. We held the Britons as well as the Scots in great esteem for sanctity, believing that they walked according to the custom of the universal Church; but on becoming acquainted with the Britons, we thought that the Scots were better; but we have learnt through Bishop Daganus¹, coming into this aforesaid island, and through Columbanus², abbot in Gaul, that the Scots, in their behaviour, differ in no way from the Britons. For Bishop Daganus coming to us, not only refused to take food with us, but even to take it in the same house in which we had our repast.' The same Laurentius also, with his fellow-bishops, sent letters worthy of his rank

¹ Of the monastery of Bangor, in Ireland. He is said to have been sent to confer with Laurentius on matters which were subjects of controversy between the two Churches.

² Eustasius, the successor of Columbanus in the monastery of Luxovium, now Luxeuil, at first defended the course taken by Columbanus, but afterwards tried to amalgamate his rules with those of St. Benedict.

to the priests of the Britons, in which he strove earnestly to confirm them in catholic unity; but what he gained by doing this, times which are still present declare ¹.

At this time, Mellitus, bishop of London, went to Rome, to treat with the apostolic pope Boniface, concerning the necessary affairs of the Church of the English. And when the same most reverend pope convened a synod of the bishops of Italy to frame rules concerning the life and peace of the monks, Mellitus himself also sat among them, in the eighth year of the reign of the emperor Focas, in the thirteenth indiction, on the third day of the Kalends of March ², in order that by subscribing to whatsoever ³ things were regularly decreed, he might confirm them by his own authority, and on his return to Britain might carry them with him, to be enjoined to and kept by the churches of the English; together with the letters which the same pontiff sent to the archbishop Laurentius, beloved by God, and to all the clergy, and likewise to King Ædilberct and the nation of the English ⁴. This was Boniface, the fourth

¹ See Chap. xx. 'Usque hodie moris sit Britonum fidem religionemque Anglorum pro nihilo habere, neque in aliquo eis magis communicare quam paganis. Ultra Sabrinæ fluminis fretum Demetarum sacerdotes de privata propriæ conversationis munditia gloriantes nostram communionem magnopere abominantur, in tantum, ut nec in ecclesia nobiscum orationum officia celebrare, nec ad mensam ciborum fercula, pro charitatis gratia, pariter percipere dignentur: quinimmo fragmenta ferculorum, et reliquias epularum lurconum canum rictibus, et immundis devorandas porcis projiciunt. Vascula quoque et phialas, aut arenosis sablonum glareis, aut fulvis favillarum cineribus expianda pargandaque præcipiunt. Non salutatio pacifica præbetur, non osculum piæ fraternitatis offertur,' &c. Adhelm, ad Geruntium Regem, in Bonifac. Epist. xlv. Serarius.

² Feb. 27.

³ 'quæque' for 'quæcunque,' a mediæval use.

⁴ Mellitus was probably accidentally present at this synod, which was

from the blessed Gregory bishop of the Roman city, who obtained from the emperor Focas that the temple at Rome, which was called by the ancients the Pantheon, as representing all the gods, should be given to the Church of Christ; in which, having expelled every abomination, he built the church of the holy mother of God and of all the martyrs of Christ, to the end that, the multitude of demons being excluded, a multitude of saints might have their memorial there.

CHAPTER V.

How the kings Ædilberct and Saberct being dead, their successors restored idolatry; on account of which both Mellitus and Justus departed from Britain.

IN the year from the Lord's incarnation 616, which is the twenty-first year from the time¹ that Augustine and his companions were sent to preach to the nation of the English, Ædilberct, king of the Cantuarii, after he had governed his temporal kingdom most gloriously for fifty-six years, entered into the eternal joys of the heavenly kingdom, who was the third of the kings of the nation of the Angles who ruled over² all their southern provinces which are separated from the northern by the river Humber, and the borders contiguous to it; but the first of all of them that

held, in part, to refute those who denied that monks could rightly officiate as priests. Boniface decreed concerning the objectors, 'ut ab hujuscemodi nefandis ausibus reprimantur in posterum.' Mans. Conc. v. 10, p. 504.

¹ The time of Augustine's first setting out from Rome.

² As Bretwalda, or paramount sovereign.

ascended to the kingdom of heaven. For Ælli, king of the South Saxons, was the first who obtained the like sovereignty. The second was Cælin, king of the West Saxons, who is called in their tongue, Ceaulin. The third, as I have said, was Ædilberct, king of the Cantuarii. The fourth was Redwald, king of the East Angles, who, whilst Ædilberct was still living, was captain-general of his nation. The fifth was Ædwin, king of the nation of the Northumbrians, that is, that which dwells in the country to the north of the river Humber, who, with greater power, ruled over all that inhabit Britain, both of the peoples of the Angles and of the Britons, except the Cantuarii only; also he subjected to the dominion of the Angles the Mevanix̃ isles¹ of the Britons, which are situated between Ireland and Britain. The sixth, Oswald, himself also the most Christian king of the Northumbrians, held the kingdom within the same limits. The seventh, Oswy, his brother, having the kingdom for some time confined within almost the same boundaries, subdued, in great part, and made tributary the nations of the Picts and Scots, which possess the northern limits of Britain. But of these things hereafter. King Ædilberct, moreover, died on the twenty-fourth day of the month February, twenty-one years after he had received the faith, and was buried in St. Martin's porch, within the church of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, where also Bercta is laid. Among other good things which, by taking counsel, he conferred upon his nation, he also constituted for it, with the advice of wise men, judicial decrees² according

¹ Anglesea and Man.

² These are contained in 'Ancient Laws and Institutes of England,' edited

to the examples of the Romans; which, being written in the language of the Angles, are still kept and observed by that nation. In these, in the first place, he set down what satisfaction he ought to make who steals anything belonging to a church, or to a bishop, or to the other orders, being desirous, in sooth, to afford protection to those whom and whose doctrine he had received. Moreover, this same Ædilberct was the son of Irminric, whose father was Octa, whose father was Æric, surnamed Oisc¹, from whom the kings of the Cantuarii are wont to be called Oiscingæ², whose father was Hengist, who with his son Oisc, being invited by Vortigern, first came into Britain, as I have before related³.

But after the death of Ædilberct, when his son Eadbald had taken the government of the kingdom, he was very detrimental to the still tender growth of the Church in those parts. For he not only refused to receive the faith of Christ, but was also polluted with such fornication as the apostle testifies⁴ was not even heard of among the Gentiles, so as to have his father's wife⁵. By both which crimes he gave an occasion of returning to their former vomit to those who, under the government of his parent,

by Thorpe, 1840. Among them is the decree that '*ecclesiæ peculium duodecies, episcopi undecies emendaretur*,' i. e. that the fine for an offence should be increased in that proportion, if it were committed against the Church, or a bishop. Wilkins, *Conc.* i. p. 127. The Angles appear to have received from Rome, together with Christianity, the principles of Roman legislation.

¹ Or Æsc, 'an ash.'

² A Saxon patronymic, as Geuissing, Wodening, Ætheling.

³ Bk. I. Chap. xv.

⁴ I Cor. v. 1.

⁵ Ædilberct married another wife on the death of Bercta.

either through flattery or fear of the king, had taken upon them the rules of faith and chastity. Nor were the scourges of Divine displeasure wanting for the punishment and correction of the perfidious king; for he was afflicted with frequent insanity of mind and the assault of an unclean spirit. Moreover, the death also of Saberct, king of the East Saxons, increased the storm of this perturbation, who, when seeking an everlasting kingdom, left his three sons, who continued pagans, the heirs of his temporal kingdom. They began afterwards to be openly enslaved to idolatry, which, whilst he lived, they seemed for a while to have dropped, and to give free licence to their subject peoples to worship idols. And when they saw the pontiff, on the occasion of the solemnities of masses being celebrated in the church, give the eucharist to the people, they said to him, as is commonly reported, being inflated with barbarous folly, 'Why do you not extend to us also the white bread which you gave our father Saba¹'—for so they used to call him—'and which you do not desist from giving to the people in the church?' To whom he answered: 'If you will be washed in that font of salvation in which your father was washed, you also may be partakers of the sacred bread of which he partook; but if you contemn the laver of life, you may on no account receive the bread of life.' But they said, 'We will not enter that font, because we are not aware that we have need of it; but, nevertheless, we wish to be refreshed with that bread.' And when they had been diligently and often

¹ The Saxons were accustomed to abbreviate names, as Cuthulfus and Cuthwin, into Cutha; Ceolric into Ceola, &c.

admonished by him that it could by no means be allowed that without the holy cleansing any one should communicate in the holy oblation, at last, being moved with rage, they said, 'If you will not assent to us in so slight a request as we make, you shall not stay longer in our province.' And they expelled him, and commanded him, together with his companions, to depart out of their kingdom. And he, having been expelled thence, came to Kent, to treat with Laurentius and Justus, his fellow-bishops, concerning what was to be done in this case¹. And it was decreed by common counsel that it would be better that all should return to their own country and serve the Lord there with a free mind, than that they should reside fruitlessly among barbarians who were rebels against the faith. Therefore Mellitus and Justus departed first, and retired to the parts of Gaul, designing there to await the event of things. But those who had driven from them the herald of the truth, did not long with impunity serve the worship of demons. For having gone out to battle against the nation of the Geuissi², all alike fell, together with their soldiery; but, although the instigators perished, the people having been excited to wickedness, could not be converted and recalled to the simplicity of faith and love which is in Christ.

¹ Mansi, v. 10, p. 35, and Wilkins, include this conference in the number of British councils.

² 'With West Seaxna theode,' 'against the nation of the West Saxons.' Saxon Version. There was another war, A.D. 616, between Æthelfrid, king of the Northumbrians, and Redwald, king of the East Angles.

CHAPTER VI.

How Laurentius, being taken to task by the apostle Peter, converted King Eadbald to Christ, who afterwards recalled Mellitus and Justus to preach.

WHEN, however, Laurentius also was about to follow Mellitus and Justus, and to leave Britain, he ordered his bed to be laid the night before in the church of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, concerning which I have already frequently spoken. When, after many prayers and tears poured forth to the Lord for the state of the Church, he had composed his limbs to rest and had fallen asleep, the most blessed chief of the apostles appeared to him, and, scourging him severely¹ during a great part of the darkness of night, inquired of him with apostolic severity why he would leave the flock which he himself had entrusted to him, or to what shepherd he, taking flight, would leave the sheep of Christ situated in the midst of wolves. 'Have you,' said he, 'forgotten my example, who for the sake of Christ's little ones whom He commended to me for a proof of His love, endured bonds, stripes, prisons, afflictions, lastly death itself, even the death of the cross, by the hands of unbelievers and enemies of Christ, that I might be crowned with Christ?' Laurentius, the servant of Christ, animated by the scourges of the blessed Peter, and at the same time by his exhortations, presently, when it was morning, went to the king,

¹ A similar vision is related concerning Natalius, Euseb. Hist. Eccl. v. 28. 8. Tertullian also says, 'Scio fratrem per visionem eadem nocte castigatum graviter.' De Idolol. xv. p. 170.

and taking off his garment, shewed with what severe stripes he had been lacerated. The king, marvelling much, asked who had dared to inflict such stripes on so great a man ; and when he heard that for his own salvation the bishop had suffered so great torture and stripes at the hands of the apostle of Christ, he was greatly afraid ; and having anathematized all the worship of idolatry, and having renounced his unlawful wedlock, he received the faith of Christ, and having been baptized, took care, as far as he was able, in all things to consult and favour the interests of the Church. He also sent to Gaul, and recalled Mellitus and Justus, and charged them to return to the free government of their churches ; who returned a year after the time that they departed. Justus, indeed, returned to the city of Hrofi, over which he before presided. The people of London, however, would not receive bishop Mellitus, delighting more to be under their idolatrous high-priests. For Eadbald had not the same power of governing that his father had, as to be able to restore the prelate to his church, against the will and inclination of the pagans. However, he, with his own nation, from the time that he was converted to the Lord, studied how to subject himself to the Divine precepts. Lastly also, in the monastery of the most blessed chief of the apostles ¹ he built the church of the holy mother of God, which the archbishop Mellitus consecrated.

¹ i. e. in the monastery which Augustine built to the east of the city of Doruvernus (Canterbury) ; in which also Ædilberct built the church of St. Peter and St. Paul. There were therefore two churches in this monastery.

CHAPTER VII.

How Mellitus the bishop extinguished by prayer the flames of his city when it was burning.

IN this king's reign the blessed Archbishop Laurentius ascended to the heavenly kingdom¹, and was buried in the church and monastery of the holy apostle Peter, near his predecessor Augustine, on the fourth day of the Nones of February². Mellitus, who was bishop of London, was the third from Augustine who succeeded to the see of the Church of Canterbury; Justus, also, yet surviving, governed the Church of Hrof; who, while they governed the Church of the Angles with great care and labour, received exhortatory writings from Boniface³, the pontiff of the Roman and apostolic see, who, after Deusdedit, was set over the Church in the year of the Lord's incarnation 619. Moreover, Mellitus was troubled indeed with a bodily infirmity, that is, the gout, but was sound in the steps of his mind, leaping lightly beyond all earthly things, and flying always to the love, the seeking, and the acquisition of heavenly things. He was noble by fleshly origin, but nobler by the height of his mind.

In short, I may relate one testimony of his virtue by which the rest may be understood. On a certain occasion, the city of Doruvernis having caught fire through the fault of negligence, began to be consumed by the in-

¹ In the Martyrologies the memory of Laurentius is kept on Feb. 2.

² Feb. 2.

³ This was Boniface V, who was pope from A.D. 619 to 625.

creasing flames; which when no one could check by any pouring of water on them, and already a considerable part of the city was destroyed, and the raging flame was extending itself towards the bishop's palace, the bishop, confiding in the Divine assistance, where human aid failed, ordered that he himself should be brought out opposite to the globes of fire that were raging and flying hither and thither. Moreover, the church of the Four blessed Crowned Martyrs¹ was in the place where the violence of the flames was most urgent. Thither the bishop, borne by the hands of his servants, began, infirm as he was, by praying to drive away the danger, which a firm band of resolute men had been unable to do by much labour. And speedily the wind, which blowing from the south had spread the conflagration over the city, changing to the contrary direction, at first withdrew the violence of its fury from injuring the places which were opposite, and afterwards, by entirely subsiding, restrained it altogether, the flames having been alike subdued and extinguished. And because the man of God was strongly inflamed with the fire of Divine charity, insomuch that he had been wont to repel the tempests of the powers of the air² by frequent prayers and exhortations from injuring himself and his friends, he was deservedly able to prevail over mundane winds and flames, and to obtain that they should not harm him or his. After he had ruled the Church five years, he departed to heaven in the reign of Eadbald, and was buried with his fathers, in the often-mentioned monastery and church of

¹ viz. Severus, Severianus, Victorinus, and Carpophorus, who suffered martyrdom at Rome in the reign of Diocletian.

² Eph. ii. 2.

the most blessed chief of the apostles, in the year from the Lord's incarnation 624, on the eighth day of the Kalends of May¹.

CHAPTER VIII.

How Pope Boniface sent a pall and an epistle to Justus his successor.

HE was immediately succeeded in the pontificate by Justus, who was bishop of the Church of Hrof. Moreover for that church he consecrated Romanus bishop, in place of himself, having had licence given him to ordain bishops by the pontiff Boniface, whom I have above spoken of as being the successor of Deusdedit; of which licence this is the form:—‘To the most beloved brother Justus, Boniface. How devotedly and how vigilantly also you, my brother, have laboured for the Gospel of Christ, not only the purport of a letter sent from you, but the accomplishment also allowed from above to your work, has indicated. For omnipotent God has forsaken neither the oath of His name nor the fruit of your labour, since He Himself on His part has faithfully promised to the preachers of the Gospel, “Lo, I am with you all days, even unto the end of the world².” Which thing His clemency has shown in the ministry specially enjoined on you, by opening the hearts of the nations to receive the wonderful mystery of your preaching. For He has illumined with great reward the delightful course of your footsteps, by the support of His goodness, whilst, rendering a rich increase for the services of your

¹ April 24.

² Matt. xxviii. 20.

most faithful management of the talents entrusted to you, he has prepared for your being able¹ to seal² it to many generations. And this also is by that reward conferred on you, in regard that you, constantly persisting in the ministry enjoined on you, await with laudable patience the salvation of that nation; and in order that they might profit by your merits, their salvation has been fore-pledged, the Lord saying, "Whoso shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved³." You are therefore saved by the hope of patience, and the virtue of endurance, that the hearts of unbelievers, being purged from their natural and superstitious disease, may obtain the mercy of their Saviour. For having received the letters⁴ of our son, king Adulwald⁵, we find with how great erudition of sacred eloquence you, my brother, have brought his mind to the belief of true conversion and undoubted faith. From which thing, taking sure confidence concerning the longsuffering of celestial clemency, we believe that by the ministry of your preaching, most full salvation, not only of the nations subjected to him, but also of those neighbouring, will ensue; to the end that, as it is written, the reward of a complete work may be rendered to you by the Lord, the recompenser of all good works, and that the universal confession of the nations that have received the mystery of the Christian faith, may truly declare, "their sound is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the ends of the world⁶."

¹ *ei quod possetis—præparavit.*

² *Rom. xv. 28.*

³ *Matthew x. 22.*

⁴ *apicibus.*

⁵ The same as Eodbald, spoken of in the previous chapter, the son and successor of Ædilberct. He is also called Audubald by Boniface.

⁶ *Ps. xix. 4; Rom. x. 18.*

‘Furthermore, my brother, being moved by the zeal of our good-will, we have sent the pall¹ to you by the bearer of these presents, which, to wit, we have only bestowed licence to use in the celebration of the holy mysteries, conceding also to you to hold ordinations of bishops, as opportunity requires, the mercy of the Lord preventing you; so that the Gospel of Christ by the preaching of many may be spread abroad among all nations which are not yet converted. Do you, my brother, therefore study to keep this which you have received by the kindness of the apostolic see, with undefiled sincerity of mind, thinking as an emblem of what thing² you have received so chief a vestment to bear on your shoulders. And study to manifest yourself such, having implored the clemency of the Lord, that you may present the gains of the privilege allowed to you, not with guilt, but with the advantage of souls, before the tribunal of that highest Judge who is about to come. May God keep you safe, most beloved brother.’

CHAPTER IX.

Concerning the reign of King Ædwin; and how Paulinus, coming to preach the Gospel to him, first initiated his daughter, with others, in the mysteries of the Christian faith.

AT which time, also, the nation of the Northumbrians, that is, that nation of the Angles which inhabited the region to

¹ The pall was originally a stole, wound round the neck, with the ends hanging down behind and before. It was called in the East ὁμοφόριον. Palmer, Orig. Liturg. vol. ii. p. 317.

² intendens cujus rei similitudine.

the north of the river Humber, with their king Ædwin, received the word of the faith at the preaching of Paulinus, of whom I have above made mention. To which king, to wit, as an augury of his receiving the faith and the celestial kingdom, power also of earthly dominion had accrued, so that he had brought under his sway, which no one of the Angles had done before him, all the regions of Britain which were provinces either of his own nation or of the Britons. Moreover, he subjugated to the rule of the Angles the Mevaniæ isles also, as I have said above¹; the first of these, which is to the south and the largest in extent, and more fertile in the growth and abundance of corn, contains the measure, according to the reckoning of the Angles, of 960 families; the second, the space of three hundred and more.

Moreover, the occasion of this nation's receiving the faith, was its aforesaid king being allied to the kings of the Cantuarii, having taken to wife Ædilbergæ, otherwise called Tataæ, the daughter of King Ædilberct. When he at first, by ambassadors sent to make proposals, asked her in marriage of her brother Æodbald, who then ruled in Kent, it was answered, 'that it was not lawful for a Christian virgin to be given to wife to a pagan, lest the faith and mysteries of the celestial King should be profaned by the

¹ Redwald, king of the East Angles, defeated and killed Ethelfrid, king of the Northumbrians, and restored Edwin, the son of Ælla, who had been a refugee with him for seventeen years. Edwin ruled over the Deiri and Bernicii, and finally brought under him all Britain, except Kent. See *Matt. West. a.* 617. He expelled all the sons of Ethelfrid—Eanfrid, who was the eldest, Oswald, Oswin, Oslac, Oswud, Oslaf, and Offa. See *Chap. v. xii.*, and *Bk. III. Chap. i.*

alliance of a king who was altogether ignorant of the worship of the true God.' When the messengers brought back to Ædwin these words, he promised that he would do nothing contrary to the Christian faith which the virgin professed, but rather would permit her, and all who should come with her, whether men or women, priests or servants, to follow, after the Christian custom, the faith and worship of their religion. Nor did he refuse himself to embrace the same religion; provided that, having been examined by the wise, it should be found more holy and more worthy of God. Hereupon the virgin is promised, and is sent to Ædwin, and according to that which had been settled, Paulinus, a man beloved of God, is ordained bishop, to go with her, and by daily exhortation and celebration of the heavenly sacraments, to confirm her and her companions, lest they should be polluted by the society of pagans. Moreover, Paulinus was ordained bishop by the archbishop Justus, on the twelfth day of the Kalends of August¹, in the year from the Lord's incarnation 625, and so, with the above-mentioned virgin, he came to King Ædwin, as a companion of their union in the flesh. But he himself intended rather with his whole mind, by calling the nation to which he came to the knowledge of the truth, to present it, according to the words of the apostle, a chaste virgin to one husband, even Christ². And when he had come into the province, he laboured much both to keep, by the Lord's help, those who had come with him, that they should not depart from the faith, and to convert some of the pagans, if perchance he could, to the grace of

¹ July 21.

² 2 Cor. xi. 2.

the faith by his preaching. But albeit he laboured a long time in the Word, as the apostle says¹, 'The god of this world blinded the minds of the unbelieving, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine upon them.'

Moreover, in the year following, there came into the province an assassin, by name Eumer², sent by the king of the East Saxons, whose name was Cuichelm, hoping that he should deprive King Ædwin both of his kingdom and his life. He had a two-edged poisoned dagger, in order that, if the wound made by the steel were not sufficient to cause the death of the king, it might be assisted by the fatal nature of the venom. He came to the king on the first day of the paschal feast, near the river Deruventio³, where the royal residence⁴ then was, and entered as if bringing a message from his master; and whilst he was explaining his feigned embassy with crafty speech, he suddenly darted forth, and having drawn his dagger from its sheath beneath his garment, assaulted the king. Which when Lilla, an attendant most devoted to the king, saw, not having a shield at hand by which he might defend the king from death, he presently interposed his body to meet the stroke of the assassin, but the enemy drove the steel with so great force, that he even wounded the king through the body of the slain soldier. And when presently he was attacked on all sides with swords, he slew in the tumult, with his accursed dagger, another of the soldiers whose name was Frodheri⁵.

¹ 2 Cor. iv. 4.

² 'Eomær,' Saxon Version.

³ Derwent, in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

⁴ Aldby (Smith); now Alby, i.e. the 'old habitation,' near Stamford Bridge, between seven and eight miles from York. (Giles.)

⁵ 'Forthere,' Saxon Version.

Moreover, on the same holy night of the Lord's paschal feast, the queen brought forth to the king a daughter, whose name was Eanfled. And when the king, in the presence of Paulinus the bishop, was giving thanks to his gods for the daughter who was born to him, the bishop, on the other hand, began to give thanks to the Lord Christ, and to acquaint the king that he himself by his prayers had obtained for him that the queen should be delivered in safety, and without severe pain. With whose words the king being delighted, promised that he, having renounced his idols, would serve Christ, if He would give him both life and victory in fighting against that king by whom the homicide, who had wounded him, was sent; and in pledge of fulfilling his promise, he assigned that same daughter of his to Paulinus the bishop, to be consecrated to Christ; and she, the first of the nation of the Northumbrians, was baptized on the holy day of Pentecost, with eleven others of her family. At which time the king, being cured of the wound which had been inflicted on him, having collected an army, went against the nation of the West Saxons, and having entered upon the war, either slew or received the submission of all whom he had learnt had conspired to put him to death¹. And thus, having returned victorious to his own country, he would not immediately and unadvisedly receive the sacraments of the Christian faith, although he

¹ Matthew of Westminster affirms that Cuichelm, the son of Kynegil was slain by Edwin in a place called afterwards *Quicbelmes baune* (read *lawe*). See Florence of Worcester (A.D. 1006): 'Inde moventes, Eascesdune transit Cuicclmes-lawe adierunt.' Probably, Cuckhams-lye, near Wallingford. The Saxon Chronicle, however, and Florence, both state that Cuichelm was baptized A.D. 636 at Dorchester (in Oxfordshire) and died the same year.

served idols no more from the time that he had promised to serve Christ. But first he took care from that time more diligently to learn thoroughly both from the venerable man Paulinus himself the reason of the faith, and also to confer with those of his nobles whom he knew to be the wisest, as to what they thought should be done concerning these things. Also he himself being by nature very intelligent, often for a long time sitting alone, with silent mouth indeed, but in the inmost recesses of his heart debating much with himself, considered what he should do, and what religion he should follow.

CHAPTER X.

How Pope Boniface, sending a letter, exhorted the same king to embrace the faith.

AT which time¹ he received from Boniface, pontiff of the apostolic see, a letter exhorting him to embrace the faith, of which this is the form :—

A copy of the letter of the most blessed and apostolical pope of the Church of the city of Rome, Boniface, sent to that glorious man Ædwin, king of the Angles.

‘To that glorious man, Ædwin, king of the Angles, Boniface, bishop, servant of the servants of God. Although the power of highest Divinity cannot be explained by the office of human speech, inasmuch as by its own greatness it so consists in invisible and unsearchable eternity,

¹ Although Bede gives these letters after the events related in the preceding chapter, which he says took place A.D. 626, they must have been written in the year 625, for Boniface died that year, October 22. Mabillon, Ann. Bened. xi. 54.

that no sagacity of intellect, how great soever, may suffice to comprehend and express it, yet because the goodness of God, to give some knowledge of itself, having unlocked the doors of the heart, kindly pours by secret inspiration into human minds those things which it reveals concerning itself, we have taken care to extend our priestly solicitude, to announce to you the fulness of the Christian faith, to the end that, by sowing in your minds also the Gospel of Christ, which our Saviour commanded to be preached to all nations, we may offer to you the means of your salvation. Therefore the clemency of Supernal Majesty, which formed and created all things by the word only of its command, to wit, the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all things which are in them, having disposed the orders by which they should subsist, dispensing them by the counsel of His own co-eternal Word, and by the unity of the Holy Spirit, made man after His own image and likeness, moulded from the clay of the earth, and allowed him so great a prerogative of reward, that he set him over all things, and stablished him with subsistence through eternity, after that he should have completed a prescribed period of time. This God, therefore, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, which is the undivided Trinity, the human race, from the rising of the sun unto the setting, venerates and worships with a salvation-bringing confession of faith, as being the Creator of all things as well as their Maker; to whom also the heights of empire and the powers of kings are subjected, because the pre-eminence of all kingdoms is granted by His disposing. The pity of His goodness, therefore, which is the subsidy for the enlargement of all that He has created,

hath wonderfully deigned to kindle, by the fervour of the Holy Spirit, to the knowledge of Himself, the cold hearts of nations situated even at the extremity of the earth. How this clemency, forsooth, of the Redeemer, has operated in the enlightening of our glorious son, King Audubald¹, and of the nations subject to him, we suppose that your majesty has the more fully understood from the nearness of the places. This wonderful gift, therefore, we trust with certain hope will be conferred also on you by the celestial longsuffering. Since we assuredly understand that your illustrious consort, who is known to be a part of your body, has been illumined with the reward of eternity, through the regeneration of holy baptism. Wherefore we have taken care now to exhort your majesty by our pen, with all the affection of intimate dearness, to the end that, having renounced idols and their worship, and having contemned the follies of their temples and the deceitful flatteries of auguries, you may believe in God, the omnipotent Father, and His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and by believing may be partaker of eternal life, being freed by the co-operating power of the holy and undivided Trinity, from the meshes of captivity to the devil.

‘ But by how much blame of guilt they are held bound who embrace and observe the most pernicious superstition of idolatries, the examples of the perdition of those whom they worship teach us; wherefore it is said of them by the Psalmist, “ All the gods of the nations are demons, but the Lord made the heavens² ” And again, “ They have eyes

¹ Eadbald, Æodbald, or Adulvald. Florence once calls him Æthelbold.

² Ps. xcvi. 5.

and see not, they have ears and hear not, they have noses and smell not; they have hands and handle not; they have feet and walk not: therefore they are made like unto them who put the hope of their confidence in them¹." For how can these have power to assist any one, that are made of corruptible matter by the hands of your inferiors and subjects; on which, to wit, you have bestowed the inanimate similitude of members, by the exercise of human skill? Which, unless they be moved by you, could not walk, but just as a stone fixed in one place, being so held fast, and having no understanding, and overwhelmed with insensibility itself, have no power either of hurting or of helping? By what deceit of mind you follow and worship these gods, to whom you yourselves have given the likeness of a body, we cannot by discreet judgment discover. Wherefore it behoves you, having received the sign of the holy cross, by which the human race was redeemed, to cast away from your hearts the execrable supplanting of diabolical cunning, which is the natural foe and rival of the works of Divine goodness; and having laid hands on them, to procure with all diligence the breaking asunder and the beating to pieces of these gods, which hitherto you have made for yourselves by the joining of material substance. For the dissolution itself and the corruption of these which never had a living spirit, nor could in any way receive sensibility from their makers, may plainly teach you how naught that was which till then you worshipped; whilst no less assuredly you who have received a living spirit from the Lord, are better than these which are made with hands; you whom, forsooth,

¹ Ps. cxv. 5-8.

omnipotent God constituted to sprout forth through innumerable shoots deduced from age to age from the kindred of the first man whom He formed. Draw near therefore to the knowledge of Him who created you, who breathed into you the breath of life, who for your redemption sent His only-begotten Son, that He might rescue you from original sin, and endow you with celestial rewards, having snatched you from the power of the devil's wickedness. Receive therefore the words of the preachers, and the Gospel of God which they proclaim to you; to the end that, believing, as has often been said, in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His Son, and in the Holy Ghost, and the indivisible Trinity, having put to flight devilish feelings, and driven from you the solicitation of the venomous and deceitful enemy, and being born again by water and by the Holy Spirit, you may by the assistance of His munificence dwell together with Him in whom you have believed, in the brightness of eternal glory. Moreover, we have sent you the benediction of your protector, the blessed Peter, chief of the apostles, that is, a surplice, with one ornament of gold, and one Ancyrian cope¹, which we beg your majesty to accept with the same mind of good-will with which it is known to have been forwarded by us.'

CHAPTER XI.

How he advised his consort, by a letter, to take sedulous care for his salvation.

To Ædilberga, also, the consort of this king, the same pontiff sent a letter to this effect :—

¹ A garment brought from Ancyra.

A copy of the letter of the most blessed and apostolic Boniface, pope of the city of Rome, directed to Ædilberga, queen of King Ædwin.

‘To the illustrious lady, his daughter, Queen Ædilberga, Boniface, bishop, servant of the servants of God. The good-will of our Redeemer to the human race, which by the effusion of His own precious blood He hath freed from the chains of captivity to the devil, hath fore-pledged many remedies of His providence whereby they might be saved; to the end that, making known the knowledge of His name in different ways to the nations, they might acknowledge their Creator, having received the mystery of the Christian faith, which, indeed, the mystical purification of your regeneration evidently shows to have been bestowed by the gift of heaven upon the mind of your majesty. Our mind, therefore, has exulted with joy in the benefit of the Lord’s bounty, because He hath deigned to kindle, in your conversion, the spark of orthodox religion; by which He might easily inflame to the love of Him the understanding not only of your glorious consort, but also of the whole nation that is subject to you. For we have learnt from word brought by those who came to us, relating the laudable conversion of our illustrious son, King Audubald, that your majesty also, having received the wonderful sacrament of the Christian faith, shines constantly in works pious and pleasing to God, carefully abstains from the worship of idols and the service of idol temples and the deceits of auguries, and so persisting in the love of her Redeemer, watches with unimpaired devotion, so that she ceases not constantly to lend her assistance to the extension of the

Christian faith. And when our paternal love had earnestly enquired concerning your illustrious consort, we received intelligence that he still served abominable idols, and had deferred to yield obedience to or receive the word of the preachers. This circumstance caused us no slight bitterness, because that a part of your body remained a stranger to the knowledge of the supreme and undivided Trinity. Wherefore, in our paternal office, we deferred not to communicate our advice to your illustrious Christian majesty, exhorting you to the end that, being imbued with the supplies of Divine inspiration, you should not postpone, out of season or in season, your endeavours that he also may be joined to the number of Christians by the co-operating power of the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, to the end that you may hold the rights of the marriage-bond in an unblemished league of union. For it is written, "They two shall be in one flesh ¹." How then can unity of conjunction be said to belong to you, if he remain an alien from the brightness of your faith, through the interposition of the darkness of detestable error. Wherefore, persisting in continual prayer, do not cease to implore of the long-suffering of celestial clemency, the benefit of his illumination, that, forsooth, those whom the union of carnal affection is shown to have made, in a manner, one body, the unity of the faith also, even after the course of this life, may preserve in perpetual fellowship. Persist, therefore, illustrious daughter, and with your utmost endeavours use betimes your chiefest diligence to soften the hardness of his heart by the religious insinuation of Divine precepts,

¹ Gen. ii. 24.

pouring into his senses how glorious is the mystery which you have received by believing, and how admirable the reward which, by being born again, you have become worthy to obtain. Inflammé the coldness of his heart by the announcement of the Holy Spirit, to the end that, the torpor of a most pernicious worship having been removed, the heat of Divine faith may inflame his understanding through the frequency of your exhortations, so that, forthwith, the testimony of Holy Scripture being fulfilled by you, may shine clearly and indubitably: "The unbelieving husband shall be saved by the believing wife¹." For to this end you have obtained the mercy of the Lord's goodness, that you should restore with manifold increase to your Redeemer the fruit of faith and of the benefits entrusted to you. Which, indeed, that you may be able to accomplish, by the aid of His goodness supporting you, we cease not to ask with constant prayers. Having, then, premised thus much, in showing forth to you the duty of our paternal love, we exhort you, when you find the opportunity of a bearer, to acquaint us as quickly as possible, by speedy messengers, with those things which through you by His supreme power He shall have deigned wonderfully to work, in the conversion of your consort, and of the nation subject to you; to the end that our solicitude, which with longing expects the things that are to be wished for, respecting the salvation of your soul and the souls of all yours, may be relieved by hearing from you; and that we, acknowledging the illumination of the Divine propitiation more richly diffused among you, may with glad confession duly give

¹ 1 Cor. vii. 14.

ample thanks to God the giver of all good things, and to the blessed Peter, the chief of apostles. We have, moreover, sent you the benediction of your protector, the blessed Peter, the chief of apostles, that is, a silver looking-glass, and a gilded ivory comb, which we request your majesty to accept, with that mind of goodwill with which it is known to have been forwarded by us.'

CHAPTER XII.

How Ædwin was induced to believe through a vision formerly manifested to him whilst he was an exile.

THESE things, indeed, the aforesaid Pope Boniface committed to writing, for the salvation of King Ædwin and his nation. Besides this, a heavenly oracle, which the Divine goodness deigned formerly to reveal to him, whilst in exile at the court of Redwald, king of the Angles, in no small degree assisted his sense to receive and to understand the admonitions of the doctrine of salvation. When, therefore, Paulinus saw that the loftiness of the king's mind could hardly be inclined to the lowliness of the way of salvation, and the reception of the mystery of the life-giving cross, and was pleading with the Divine goodness, by the word of prayer, and with men, by the word of exhortation, both for his salvation and that of the nation over which he ruled; at length, as seems probable, he learnt in the spirit what and what kind of oracle was formerly revealed by heaven to the king. Nor afterwards did he defer immediately to admonish the king to fulfil his vow, which on the occasion of the oracle being revealed to him, he had

promised to perform, if being freed from the trouble he was in at that time, he should be raised to the throne.

The oracle, moreover, was this. When Ædilfrid, who reigned before him, was persecuting him¹, he wandered an exile² for a long term of years, hiding in various places and kingdoms. At length he came to Redwald, beseeching him that he would, by protecting him, save his life from the snares of so great a persecutor. And he, willingly receiving him, promised that he would do what he requested³. But after Ædilfrid learnt that he had appeared in this province, and that he and his companions were living on terms of intimacy with the king, he sent messengers to offer Redwald a large sum of money for his destruction, but without effect. He sent a second time, he sent a third time, both offering more ample gifts of gold and silver, and, moreover, declaring war against him, in case his offer should be rejected. And he, whether subdued by threats, or corrupted by presents, yielded to his request, and promised that either he himself would kill Ædwin, or that he would deliver him up to his

¹ Edwin was son and heir of Ælla, king of the Deiri. He was three years old at the death of his father, and when the kingdom was seized by Ædilfrid, king of the Bernicii, who had married Acca, the daughter of Ælla, he took refuge with Redwald, the powerful king of the East Saxons. Ædilfrid began to reign A.D. 593, Sax. Chron. Ida, the first king of Northumbria, reigned from A.D. 547 to 559. His son Adda, and after him other sons of Ida, reigned over the Bernicii, but Ælla reigned in Deira from A.D. 559 to 589. On the death of Ælla, Æthelric, who had succeeded his father and brothers as king of the Bernicii, expelled Edwin the son of Ælla, and added the kingdom of the Deiri to his own, and held it five years. On the death of Æthelric, his son Ædilfrid succeeded him.

² Before Edwin sought the protection of Redwald, he resided at the court of Cearl, king of Mercia, and married his daughter Quenburga, Chap. xiv.

³ *quæ petebatur*, 'what he was asked.'

messengers. Which when a certain most faithful friend of his perceived, he entered the chamber where he was laying himself down to sleep, for it was the first hour of the night, and having called him forth, told him what the king had promised to do with regard to him, and moreover added, 'If, then, you wish it, I will this very hour conduct you out of this province, and lead you to a place where neither Redwald nor Ædilfrid will ever be able to find you.' And he said, 'I thank you indeed for your kindness, nevertheless I cannot do what you suggest, so as myself to be the first to render void the compact which I have made with so great a king, when he has done me no evil, and taken as yet no hostile course. But, on the contrary, if I must die, let him, rather than any more ignoble person, put me to death. For whither shall I now fly, who, wandering in the course of so many years and times through all the provinces of Britain, have been shunning the snares of my enemies.' When, therefore, his friend had departed, Ædwin remained alone out of doors, and sitting sorrowfully before the palace, began to be affected with many tides of thought, not knowing what to do, or whither to turn his foot.

And when for a long time he had been distracted with silent anguish of mind, and hidden fire¹, he saw suddenly, in the silence of the dead of night, a man² approaching him, of countenance and garb unknown to him; at the sight of whom, as being unknown and unlooked for, he was not a little frightened. But he, drawing nigh, saluted him, and asked him why at that hour, when all others

¹ Virg. *Æn.* iv. 2 : 'cæco carpitur igni.'

² Hook, i. 100, supposes that this was Paulinus himself.

were at rest and overcome by deep sleep, he alone sat sad and wakeful on a stone. Then he, in turn, asked what it mattered to him whether he passed the night within or out of doors. And he in answer said, 'Do not imagine that I am ignorant of the cause of your sorrow and sleeplessness, and of your sitting by yourself out of doors; for I know most certainly who you are, and why you are sad: and the evils that you fear will shortly happen to you. But tell me what reward you are willing to give him, should there be any one, who can deliver you from these sorrows, and persuade Redwald, neither to do you any harm himself, nor yet to deliver you up to your enemies to be put to death.' And when he had answered that he would give all that he was able to such an one, as a reward for such a benefit, the other added; 'But what if he should promise, in truth, that you should be king after having destroyed your enemies, so that you should transcend in power not only all your progenitors, but also all who before you had been kings in the nation of the Angles?' *Ædwin*, encouraged by these questions, did not hesitate to promise that he would make a suitable return, by thankworthy actions, to him who should confer so great benefits on him. Then he said the third time, 'But if he, who has truly foretold that such and so great gifts are about to fall to your lot, should also be able to show you a better and more profitable counsel for your salvation and life than any one of your parents or kindred ever heard of, do you consent to obey him, and to receive his salutary monitions?' *Ædwin* did not hesitate to promise at once that he would in all things follow the teaching of him who should deliver him from

so many and so great calamities, and exalt him to a throne. Having received this answer, the person who spoke with him forthwith laid his right hand on his head, saying, 'When then this sign shall come to you, remember this time and my discourse, and delay not to perform those things which you now promise.' And having said this, as they report, he immediately disappeared, so that he might understand that it was not a man, but a spirit, who had appeared to him.

And while the royal youth was still sitting alone in the same place, rejoicing indeed on account of the consolation which had been granted him, but very solicitous, and considering with earnest mind who he was and whence he came who had thus talked to him, his aforesaid friend came to him, and saluting him with joyful countenance, said, 'Arise, go in, and having set at rest and dismissed the anxieties of your cares, compose in quiet both your limbs and your mind, because the heart of the king is changed, and he designs to do you no harm, but rather to keep his pledged faith; for after he had privately revealed his intention, concerning which I told you before, to the queen, she dissuaded him from that intention, admonishing him that it was by no means the part of so great a king to sell for gold his best friend, who was in distress, and even to sacrifice his own honour, which is more precious than all ornaments, for the mere love of money.' Why more? The king did as she advised, and not only refused to deliver up the exile to the hostile messengers, but even assisted him to regain the kingdom. For afterwards, when the messengers returned home, he collected a large army for the

overthrow of Ædilfrid, and on the latter's advancing to meet him with a much inferior army—for he had not given him time to collect and unite the whole of his forces—he slew him on the borders of the nation of the Mercians, on the east side of the river which is called Idlæ¹. In this conflict, also, Redwald's son, by name Rægenheri², was killed; and so Ædwin, according to the oracle which he had received, not only avoided the snares of a king who was hostile to him, but also, on the same being killed, succeeded him on the throne.

When, therefore, whilst Paulinus was preaching the word of God, the king delayed to believe, and for some time, as I have said, was wont to sit many hours alone, and seriously consider with himself what he ought to do, and what religion he should follow, the man of God one day came in unto him, laid his right hand on his head, and asked whether he recognized that sign. And when he trembled and was about to fall at his feet, he raised him up, and addressed him as with a familiar voice. 'Behold,' said he, 'you have escaped, by the gift of the Lord, the hands of the enemies whom you feared; behold, by His bounty, you have received the kingdom which you

¹ The battle was fought at Idleton, near Retford, on the eastern bank of the river Idle, in Nottinghamshire. Henry of Huntingdon, *Mon. Hist. Brit.* p. 715, has preserved the translation of an early proverbial saying, 'Amnis Idle Anglorum sorduit cruore.' Matthew of Westminster also quotes this proverb. He refers the battle to A.D. 617, as also do the *Saxon Chronicle* and *Annales Cambriæ*. Florence of Worcester gives A.D. 616 as the year in which it was fought. Æthelfrid is said by more than one chronicler to have lost the battle in consequence of his attacking Redwald too impetuously at first.

² Called Reiner by Brompton and Matthew of Westminster. Perhaps from 'rein,' pure, and 'here,' fame.

desired. Take heed not to delay to perform the third promise you made, by receiving His faith and keeping His precepts, who has both delivered you from temporal adversity, and exalted you to the honour of a temporal kingdom. And if, further, you shall be obedient to His will, which by me He declares to you, He will also free you from the perpetual torments of the wicked, and make you partaker with Him of His eternal kingdom in heaven.'

CHAPTER XIII.

What counsel he also took with his nobles about receiving the faith of Christ; and how his high-priest profaned his own altars.

THE king, having heard these things, answered that he was both willing and bound to receive the faith which he taught, but still, he said, that he would confer about it with his chief friends and counsellors, to the end that if they also were inclined to think the same with him, all alike might be consecrated to Christ in the font of life. And, on the assent of Paulinus, he did as he had said. For having taken counsel with his wise men, he enquired of each individually, what he thought of this doctrine, as yet unheard of, and this new Divine worship which was preached. To whom Coifi, the chief of his priests, forthwith replied: 'O king, consider what kind of religion that is which is now preached to us; but I most truly declare to you what I have certainly learned, that the religion which hitherto we have professed has no virtue nor utility at all. For no one of your subjects has devoted himself to the worship of our gods more zealously

than I; yet there are many who receive greater benefits from you, and greater dignities than I, and prosper more in all things which they are disposed to transact or acquire. But if the gods had any power, they would be willing rather to assist me who have taken more care to serve them. Wherefore it remains, that if after examination made, you shall find these new doctrines which are now preached to us to be better and more substantial, we should without any delay hasten to receive them.'

Another of the nobles of the king giving assent to his persuasion and prudent words, forthwith added, saying, 'The present life of man on the earth appears to me, O king, in comparison of that time which is unknown to us, such as if—when you are sitting at supper with your leaders and ministers, in the winter-time, a fire indeed having been lighted and made to glow in the middle of the supper-room, but storms of wintry rain and snow raging everywhere without—a sparrow should come and fly very quickly through the house, entering by one door and going out afterwards by another. During the very time, indeed, in which he is within, he is untouched by the wintry storm, but yet after that very small space of serenity is in a moment passed through, presently returning into the stormy winter that he quitted, he glides from your eyes. So this life of men appears for a short time, but of what follows or of what preceded we are altogether ignorant. Wherefore, if this new doctrine has brought anything more certain, it seems that it ought deservedly to be followed.' The other elders also and counsellors of the king, being Divinely admonished, followed by speaking to the same effect.

Coifi, moreover, added that he wished more attentively to hear Paulinus himself discourse concerning the God whom he preached. Which, when at the command of the king he did, he exclaimed, having heard his discourses, ‘Already long since I had understood that what we worshipped was naught, because, to wit, the more earnestly I sought the truth in that worship, the less I found it. But now I openly confess that in this preaching that truth is evident, which can afford us the gifts of eternal life, salvation, and happiness. Wherefore I advise, O king, that with all speed we render to anathema and fire the temples and altars which we have consecrated without deriving any benefit.’ Why more? The king openly gave his assent to the preaching of the Gospel by the blessed Paulinus, and, having renounced idolatry, confessed that he received the faith of Christ. And when he asked of the aforesaid high-priest of his own sacred rites, who should be the first to profane the altars and temples of the idols, with the inclosures by which they were surrounded, he answered, ‘I; for who more suitably than myself, by the wisdom given me by the true God, shall destroy those things which I worshipped through foolishness?’ And immediately, having discarded the vain superstition, he asked the king to allow him arms, and a stallion, on which he might go to destroy the idols. For it had not been lawful for the high-priest of the sacred rites either to bear arms, or to ride, except on a mare. Being girt, therefore, with a sword, he took a lance in his hand, and mounting the king’s stallion, went towards the idols. The common people beholding it, thought that he was mad. Nor did he delay presently when he approached the temple, to profane it by

casting against it the lance which he held; and rejoicing much in the knowledge of the worship of the true God, he commanded his companions to destroy and burn the temple with all its enclosures. Moreover, that place where the idols formerly were, is still shown not far from York, to the eastward, beyond the river Derwent, and is now called Godmunddingaham¹, where the high-priest himself, by the inspiration of the true God, polluted and destroyed those altars which he had himself consecrated².

CHAPTER XIV.

How the same Ædwin and his nation were made Christians, and how Paulinus baptized.

KING Ædwin, therefore, together with all the nobles of his nation, and very many of the common people, received the faith and washing of sacred regeneration, in the eleventh year of his reign, which is the year of the Lord's incarnation 627, and about the year 180 from the coming of the Angles into Britain. Moreover, he was baptized at York, on the holy day of Easter, the day before the Ides of April³, in the church of the holy apostle Peter, which he himself built of wood in that place with expeditious labour, while he was being catechized and prepared in order to receive baptism. In

¹ Now Godmundham, or Goodmanham, i.e. 'the sacred enclosure of the gods,' near Market-Weighton, the Roman Delgovitium, which Camden derives from the Cymbric 'Delgwe,' 'the statues of the gods.' Weighton is probably the same as Wigton, i.e. 'the town of the images.' Camden iii. 312, 313.

² Virg. Æn. ii. 502: 'quos ipse sacraverat ignes.'

³ April 12.

which city also he gave to his teacher and prelate, Paulinus, the see of a bishopric. But afterwards, when he had received baptism, he took care, by the direction of the same Paulinus, to build a larger and grander church of stone in the same place; in the middle of which the same oratory which he had before built should be included. The foundations, therefore, having been laid, encompassing the former oratory, he proceeded to build the church rectangular. But before the height of the wall was completed, the king, being cut off by an impious death, left the same work to be finished by his son and successor, Oswald. Moreover Paulinus, from that time for six years following, that is, to the end of the reign of that king, preached the word of God in that province, by his permission and favour; and as many as were fore-ordained to eternal life¹, believed and were baptized. Among whom were Osfrid and Eadfrid, the sons of King Ædwin, who were both born to him while he was in exile, of Quoenburga, the daughter of Cearl² king of the Mercians. Other children of his, also, begotten by him of Queen Ædilberga, were in time following baptized, Ædilhun, and his daughter Ædilthryd, and another son, Vuscfrea, of whom the two first, whilst still wearing their white garments, were snatched from this life, and buried in the church at York. Also Yffi, the son of Osfrid, was baptized, and not a few other noble and illustrious men. Moreover, so great is said to have been at that time the fervour of faith, and the desire of the laver of salvation

¹ Acts xiii. 48.

² Florence of Worcester, p. 652, identifies Cearl with Creoda, Penda's grandfather.

among the nation of the Northumbrians, that on a certain time, Paulinus coming with the king and queen to a royal country residence, which is called Adgefrin¹, tarried there with them thirty-six days, wholly occupied in the employment of catechizing and baptizing. On all which days, from morning until evening, he did nothing else but instruct in Christ's word of salvation the people who came together thither from all the villages and neighbouring parts, and wash them, when instructed, in the laver of remission, in the river Glen, which was near. This country residence was deserted in the time of the following kings, and another was built instead of it, in a place which is called Maelmin². This, indeed, is in the province of the Bernicii; but also in the province of the Deiri, where he was wont often to stay with the king, he baptized in the river Sualua³, which flows by the town of Cataracta⁴. For not as yet, in the very beginning of the infant Church, could oratories or baptisteries be built there. But in Campodonum⁵, where there was then also a royal country residence, he built a church, which afterwards the pagans, by whom King Ædwin was killed, burnt, together with the whole of the same country house, instead of which the following kings built for themselves a country residence⁶,

¹ Now Yeavering, in Glendale, near Wooler, Northumberland. Camden, p. 1097. The river is now called Bowent (Smith), or Beaumont (Moberly).

² Milfield, near the Till. Camden, iii. 521.

³ The Swale.

⁴ Now Catterick, or Catterick-bridge, near Richmond. Camden, p. 921. It was the site of the Roman station Cataractonium.

⁵ Perhaps the same as the Cambodunum of Antoninus, p. xxi., which is identified with Almondbury. In the Saxon Version it is rendered Donafeld, whence Gale supposes it to have been Tanfield, near the Swale.

⁶ Now Oswintherp.

in the region which is called Loidis ¹. The altar, however, because it was of stone, escaped the fire, and is still preserved in the monastery of the most reverend abbot and presbyter, Thrydwulf, which is in the forest of Elmete ².

CHAPTER XV.

How the province of the East Angles received the faith of Christ.

So much devotion, however, had Ædwin towards the worship of truth, that he even persuaded Eorpwald ³, king of the East Angles, the son of Redwald, to leave the superstitions of idols, and together with his province to receive the faith and sacraments of Christ. And indeed his father Redwald was long ago made acquainted, in Kent, with the sacraments of the Christian faith, but in vain; for on his return home, he was perverted by his wife, and certain perverse teachers, and having been turned aside from the sincerity of the faith, his last state became worse than the first, so that, after the manner of the Samaritans of old, he seemed both to serve Christ and the gods which he before served: and in the same temple he had both an altar for the sacrifice of Christ, and a small altar for the victims offered to demons. Which temple, to

¹ The name of Leeds is, probably, derived hence.

² The old Saxon MS. gives the Elmedsætna as containing six hundred hides. The name is preserved by the towns of Barwick-in-Elmet, and Sherburn-in-Elmet.

³ Florence, Florilegus, and the Saxon Chronicle place Eorpwald's conversion in 632. Smith assigns it to A.D. 327, and Moberly to A.D. 325.

wit, Aldwulf, king of the same province, who lived in our age, witnessed had remained until his time, and that he had seen it in his childhood. Moreover, the aforesaid king Redwald was noble by birth, although ignoble in his actions, being the son of Tytilus, whose father was Vuffa, from whom the kings of the East Angles are called Vuffingæ. But Eorpwald, not long after he had received the faith, was killed by a pagan named Ricberct, and for three years from that time the province was in an unsettled state, until Sigberct, the brother of the same Eorpwald, received the kingdom, a man in all respects most Christian and learned, who when he was an exile in Gaul, his brother being still living, was initiated in the sacraments of the faith, of which he took care to make the whole of his province to partake afterwards when he began to reign. His exertions were most signally promoted by the bishop Felix, who, when he had come from the parts of the Burgundians, where he was born and ordained, to the archbishop Honorius, and had told him of his desire, was sent by him to preach the word of life to the aforesaid nation of the Angles. Nor were his wishes frustrated; for the pious cultivator of the spiritual field found in it manifold fruit of believing peoples, inasmuch as he freed the whole of that province, according to the signification¹ of his own name, from long iniquity and infelicity, and brought it to faith and the works of righteousness, and the gifts of everlasting felicity. He received the see of a bishopric in the city of Domnoc², and

¹ sacramentum.

² Dunwich, a city formerly on the coast of Suffolk, but now swept away by the sea. The see was removed afterwards to Helmham, then to Thetford, and finally to Norwich. Camden, p. 447.

having for seventeen years presided over the same province with pontifical authority, he ended his life there in peace.

CHAPTER XVI.

How Paulinus preached in the province of Lindissis¹, and concerning the character of the reign of Ædwin.

PAULINUS, moreover, preached the word also to the province of Lindissis, which is the first on the south side of the river Humber, reaching as far as the sea; and converted to the Lord first the præfect of the city of Lindocolin², whose name was Blæcca, with his house. In which city, to wit, he built also a church of stone of remarkable workmanship, the roof of which having fallen either through long neglect, or by the hand of an enemy, the walls are still seen standing, and every year some miracles of healings are wont to be wrought in the same place, for the benefit of those who seek them with faith. In which church Paulinus, when Justus had departed to Christ, consecrated Honorius bishop in his stead, as I shall relate hereafter in its proper place. Concerning the faith of this province, a certain presbyter and abbot, a man of the greatest veracity, of the monastery of Peartaneu³, by name Deda, narrated to me that an elderly man told him that he had been

¹ Lindsey, the northernmost of the three divisions of Lincolnshire—Lindsey, Holland, and Kesteven. Its inhabitants were called Lindisfari.

² Lincoln; the British *Caer Luit-coed*, the Roman *Lindum*.

³ Partenay, where was a cell belonging to the abbey of Bardney. ‘*Duas illas cellas de Partenay et de Skendelby ad dictum monasterium (de Bardeney) pertinentes.*’ *Monast. Angl.* i. 634.

baptized, together with a great number of people, at mid-day, by the bishop Paulinus, King Ædwin being present, in the river Treenta, near the city which is called in the tongue of the Angles Tiovulfingacæstir¹; who also was wont to describe the person of the same Paulinus, that he was a man of tall stature, a little stooping, with black hair, a meagre face, a thin aquiline nose, his aspect both venerable and awful. Moreover he had also with him, in the ministry, James the deacon, a man very zealous, and of repute in Christ and in the Church, who remained alive even to our time. Moreover, so great peace is said to have been in Britain at that time, wherever the sway of King Ædwin extended, that, as it is said even to this day in a proverb, a woman with her new-born child might walk through the whole island, from sea to sea, without any one harming her. So much did the same king consult for the advantage of his nation, that in very many places where he saw clear fountains near the public roads, there, for the refreshment of travellers, he caused posts to be set up with brazen drinking-vessels² suspended from them. Nor did any one dare to touch them except for necessary use, through the greatness either of their dread or of their love of him. Moreover, the excellency of his rule was so great, that not only in battle were standards carried before him, but even in time of peace a standard-bearer was wont always to go before him when he rode about his cities or country residences, or provinces, with his attendants. Also, when he walked anywhere

¹ According to Camden, Southwell in Nottinghamshire.

² *caucos*. 'Diogenes habens ad potandum caucum ligneum.' Hieron. ad Jovin. ii. 14.

through the streets, that kind of standard which the Romans call *Tufa*¹, the Angles '*Tuuf*,' was wont to be carried before him.

CHAPTER XVII.

How Ædwin received a letter of exhortation from Pope Honorius, who also sent a pall to Paulinus.

AT that time Honorius, the successor of Boniface, held the prelateship of the apostolical see, who, when he learnt that the nation of the Northumbrians, with their king, had been converted to the faith and confession of Christ, by the preaching of the Gospel by Paulinus, sent to the same Paulinus a pall, and sent also to King Ædwin a letter of exhortation², inciting him, with paternal affection, to the end that he should take care to persist always and to make progress in the faith of the truth which he had received. Of which letter, to wit, this is the tenor :—

'To the most excellent lord and our most noble son Ædwin, king of the Angles, Honorius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, greeting. The integrity of your Christian majesty is so inflamed with the ardour of faith in the worship of your Creator, that it shines far and wide, and being reported in all the world, returns in a manifold degree the fruit of your labour. For so you know that you are a king³, whilst, having

¹ A kind of standard made of plumes. 'Muta signa sunt, aquilæ, dracones, vexilla, flamulæ, tufæ, pinnæ.' Vegetius, lib. iii. cap. 5.

² It appears from the letter of Pope Honorius to Honorius archbishop of Canterbury, in the next chapter, that both it and the letter to Ædwin were written A.D. 634.

³ Rev. v. 10.

been taught by orthodox preaching, you believe and venerate God, and, as far as the condition of humanity is able, pay to Him the sincere devotion of your mind. For what else shall we be able to offer to our God, unless that persisting in good actions and confessing Him the author of the human race, we be diligent in worshipping Him, and paying our vows to Him. And therefore, most excellent son, we exhort you with paternal love, as is fitting, that you be diligent, since the Divine pity has deigned to call you to His grace, with careful attention and earnest prayers to persevere by all means, in order that He who in the present world has deigned to absolve you from all error and to bring you to the knowledge of His name, may also prepare for you a mansion in the celestial country. Employing yourself, therefore, in frequently reading the works of my lord Gregory¹, your preacher, of apostolical memory, keep before your view the affection of his teaching which he willingly exercised for the sake of your souls; to the end that his prayer may increase both your kingdom and people, and present you blameless to omnipotent God. The things, therefore, which you hoped would be ordered by us for your priests, these, on account of the sincerity of your faith which has been made known to us in terms of praise by the bearers of these presents, in various narrations, we have provided to render to you, without any delay, in a spirit that seeks no return; and we have sent two palls, for the two metropolitans, that is, Honorius and Paulinus, to the intent

¹ St. Gregory's writings were much in use throughout the Western Church. Even during his lifetime some were appointed to be read at Vigils. *Greg. Epist. xii. 24.*

that, when either of them shall be called out of this world to his Maker, the other may appoint a bishop in his place by this our authority. Which, indeed, as well in consideration of the affection of your love, as of the extent of so great provinces as are known to lie between us and you, we were induced to grant, that in all things we might afford our concurrence to your devotion, according to your desires. May grace from above keep your excellency in safety.'

CHAPTER XVIII.

How Honorius, who succeeded Justus in the episcopate of the Church of Canterbury, received a pall and a letter from the same Pope Honorius.

IN the meantime¹, Justus the archbishop was removed to the heavenly kingdom, on the fourth day of the Ides of November², and Honorius was elected in his stead to the archbishopric; who came to Paulinus to be ordained, and on his meeting him in Lincoln, was consecrated the fifth bishop of the Church of Canterbury from Augustine. To whom also the aforesaid Pope Honorius sent a pall and a letter, in which he decrees this same thing which he had

¹ Bede does not give the date of the death of Justus. Honorius must have been consecrated at Lincoln before A.D. 633, when Paulinus left the province of York; but not later than A.D. 631, since the episcopates of Felix and Thomas, who were both consecrated by Honorius, lasted twenty-two years previous to the death of Honorius, in A.D. 653. Justus, probably, died A.D. 630. Honorius was consecrated, probably, A.D. 631; and the pall sent A.D. 634. (Smith).

² Nov. 10.

decreed in the epistle sent to King Ædwin, to wit, that when either the prelate of Canterbury or York should depart this life, the survivor, sharing the same dignity, should have the power of ordaining another priest in the place of the departed; that it might not be necessary always to travel to the city of Rome, over so long distances of sea and land, to ordain an archbishop. Of which letter I have also thought fit to give the text in this my history.

‘Honorius to his most beloved brother Honorius. Among very many gifts of good things, which the pity of our Redeemer deigns to bestow on His servants, is that special gift which by the bounteous munificence of His goodness He bestows, as often as united love is represented through fraternal addresses by a kind of contemplation in alternate aspects¹. For which things we give thanks to His Majesty without ceasing, and entreat Him with suppliant prayers, that He will confirm with perpetual stability your love that labours in the preaching of the Gospel, and fructifies and follows the rule of its master and head, the holy Gregory; and will raise up by your means still greater increase to the advancement of His Church; to the end that, by faith and works, in the fear of God, and in brotherly love, the acquisition made by you and your predecessors, which buds forth through the beginnings made by our lord Gregory, may flourish and be more widely extended; that so the promises declared by our Lord may hereafter be fulfilled in you, and that those words may summon you to eternal joy, “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you².” And again, “Well done, good

¹ i.e. By epistolary correspondence.

² Matt. xi. 28.

and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord¹." And we, indeed, most beloved brethren, offering to you beforehand these words of exhortation out of our endless love, do not fail to grant what things further we see may be fitting, according to the privileges of your churches; and so, according to your petition, as also that of the kings our sons, by our present right², in the place of the blessed Peter, chief of the apostles, we assign authority to you, that when the grace of God bids one of you to be summoned to Himself, the survivor shall ordain another bishop in the room of the deceased. For which purpose we have sent a pall to each of you, well-beloved, for the celebration of the same ordination, that by the authority of our right, you may make an ordination acceptable to God; inasmuch as the long distance of land and sea that intervenes between us and you, has compelled us to make these concessions, that no loss may befall your churches in any way, on any pretence whatever, but rather that the devotion of the people committed to you may be more fully extended. May God keep you safe, most dearly-beloved brother. Given on the third day of the Ides of June, during the reign of our lords the Augusti, the twenty-fourth year of Heraclius, and the twenty-third year after the consulship of the same; and the twenty-third year of Constantine his son, and the third year after his consulship; moreover, also, in the third year

¹ Matt. xxv. 23.

² *præceptione*, 'bequest,' or 'right proceeding from a bequest.'

of his son Heraclius¹, the most prosperous Cæsar, in the seventh indiction, that is, in the year of the Lord's incarnation 634.'

CHAPTER XIX.

How this Honorius first, and afterwards John, sent letters to the nation of the Scots, concerning the keeping of Easter, and also concerning the Pelagian heresy.

THE same Pope Honorius also sent a letter to the nation of the Scots, whom he had found to err in the observance of the sacred festival of Easter, according as I have above shown, earnestly exhorting them not to esteem their own small number, situate in the extreme limits of the earth, wiser than the Churches of Christ, ancient and modern, which were throughout the world, and not to celebrate another Easter contrary to the paschal computations and the synodical decrees of the pontiffs of the whole world.

Moreover John², who succeeded Severinus, the successor of the same Honorius, when as yet he was but pope elect, sent them a letter full of great authority and learning, for the correction of the same error, evidently showing that the Lord's day of the Easter feast ought to be sought for from the fifteenth day of the moon to the twenty-first, as was proved at the Council of Nice. Also he took care to admonish them in the same epistle, with regard to

¹ Moberly considers this to have been Heracleonas, who was associated with his father and brother as Augustus, A.D. 639. Gibbon, vol. ix. p. 10.

² John was consecrated Pope Dec. 25, A.D. 640.

preventing and repelling the Pelagian heresy, which he learnt had revived among them; of which epistle this is the beginning:—

‘ To our best-beloved and most holy bishops, Tomianus¹, Columbanus², Cromanus³, Dinnaus⁴, and Baithanus⁵; to Cromanus⁶, Ernianus⁷, Laistranus⁸, Scellanus⁹, and Segenus¹⁰, priests; to Saranus¹¹ and the other Scottish doctors and abbots, Hilarus archpresbyter, and keeper of the place of the holy apostolic see; John, the deacon, elected also in the name of God; also John the chief secretary¹², and keeper of the place of the holy apostolic see, and John the servant of God, and counsellor of the same apostolic see, greeting. The writings, which the bearers brought to Pope Severinus of holy memory, were left, on his departure out of this life, unopened, and without an answer to the enquiries which were made in them. Having opened which, in order that doubt with respect to so great a question should not remain

¹ Tomianus was bishop of Armagh. He died A.D. 661. Tigern. Ann. ad a.

² Probably bishop of Clunirard, who died A.D. 652.

³ ‘Croman becc,’ ‘the small,’ bishop of Antrim, who died Jan. 7, A.D. 643.

⁴ Bishop of Connor, who died Jan. 6, A.D. 699.

⁵ A disciple and companion of Columba, and bishop of Techbaitan in Connaught.

⁶ Possibly St. Cronan, of the abbey of Maghbile, who died A.D. 650. Tigern. Ann. ad a.

⁷ The disciple of Columba, and abbot of the monastery built by that saint, ‘in insula Torachia.’ Annal. iv. Mgr. ad a. 616.

⁸ Abbot of Lethgliann. He died A.D. 639.

⁹ Sillain, bishop of Damhindse, who died A.D. 659.

¹⁰ Fifth abbot of Iona. He died A.D. 652.

¹¹ ‘Saran o’ Cridan,’ who died A.D. 662.

¹² primicerius, literally, ‘he whose name stands first on the waxen tablets.’

for a long time undisputed, we found that certain of your province, endeavouring to revive a new heresy out of an old one, contrary to the orthodox faith, do, in their cloudy darkness, reject our passover in which Christ was sacrificed, and contend for the celebration of it with the Hebrews, on the fourteenth day of the moon.' In the beginning of which epistle it is plainly declared that, at that time, this heresy had very recently arisen among them, and that not all their nation, but certain among them, were implicated in it.

Moreover, having explained the method of keeping Easter, they add this concerning the Pelagians, in the same epistle. 'And we also understand that the venom of the Pelagian heresy is reviving afresh among you; wherefore we by all means exhort that the venomous wickedness of this superstition be removed from your minds. For it ought not to escape your recollection, how this execrable heresy has been condemned, inasmuch as it has not only been abolished for these two hundred years, but is also daily condemned by us as buried in a perpetual anathema; and we exhort you not to let the ashes of those whose weapons have been burnt, be stirred up among you. For who would not execrate the proud and impious suggestion of those who say that man can exist without sin of his own free-will, and not by the grace of God. And indeed it is the height of folly and blasphemy to say that man is without sin; which in no wise can be, with the exception of Christ Jesus, the one Mediator of God and men, who was conceived and born without sin. For other men, being born in original sin, are known to bear testimony to the prevarication of Adam, even whilst they are without actual sin; according to the

saying of the prophet, "Behold I was shapen in iniquities, and in sins hath my mother conceived me¹."

CHAPTER XX.

How, on the death of Ædwin, Paulinus, returning to Kent, received the prelateship of the Church of Hrof.

BUT when Ædwin had ruled over the nation of the Angles, and also of the Britons, most gloriously for seventeen years, during six² of which, as I have said, he was a soldier of the kingdom of Christ, Cædwalla king of the Britons³ rebelled against him, being assisted by Penda⁴, a most strenuous man of the royal family of the Mercians, who himself also, at that time, governed the same nation with various fortune for two and twenty years; and a severe battle having been fought in the plain which is called Hæthfelth⁵, Ædwin was killed on the fourth day of the Ides of October, in the year of the Lord's incarnation 633, when he was forty-eight years old, and his whole army was either slain or dispersed. In which war also one of his sons, Osfrid, a warlike youth, fell before him⁶; the other, Eadfrid, compelled by necessity,

¹ Psalm li. 5.

² Exactly six years and six months. For he was baptized April 12, A.D. 647, and was slain October 12, A.D. 653.

³ King of Gwynedd, also called Catguollaun, Catgublaun, Cathlon. (Moberly.)

⁴ The son of Wibba, king of Mercia. The Saxon Chronicle gives his accession in A.D. 626. He died A.D. 655.

⁵ Now Hatfield, in Yorkshire.

⁶ Godbold, king of the Orcades, who had come as Ædwin's ally, was also slain. (Brompton.)

fled to king Penda, and was put to death by him afterwards in the reign of Oswald, contrary to the faith of his oath.

At which time there was a very great slaughter made in the Church and nation of the Northumbrians, chiefly because one of the leaders, by whom it was perpetrated, was a pagan, and the other a barbarian more cruel than a pagan. For Penda, together with all the nation of the Mercians, was given up to idols, and was ignorant of the name of Christian: but Cædwalla, indeed, although he had the name and profession of a Christian, was such a barbarian in mind and manners, that he spared neither the female sex, nor the innocent age of little children, but, with bestial ferocity, put them all to death with tortures, ravaging in mad fury for a long time the whole of their provinces, and considering how he should extirpate the whole race of the Angles from the confines of Britain. Nor did he pay any respect to the Christian religion which was sprung up among them. Since, forsooth, even to this day it is the custom of the Britons to make no account of the religion and faith of the Angles, and to have no more communion with them in anything than with pagans. Moreover, the head of King Ædwin was brought to York, and having been taken afterwards into the church of the blessed apostle Peter, which he himself began, but his successor Oswald completed, as I have said above, was deposited in the chapel of the holy pope Gregory, from whose disciples he had received the word of life.

The affairs, then, of the Northumbrians being disturbed at this disastrous crisis, when there was no prospect of safety except in flight, Paulinus, taking with him Queen Ædilberga,

whom he had formerly brought thither, returned by ship to Kent, and was received with much honour by Honorius the archbishop, and King Eadbald. Moreover, he came thither¹ under the conduct of Bassus, a most valiant soldier of king Ædwin, having with him Eanfleda the daughter, and Vuscfrean the son, of Ædwin, also Yffi the son of his son Osfrid, whom afterwards their mother, through fear of the kings Eadbald and Oswald, sent to France to be brought up by King Dægberect², who was her friend; and there both died in infancy, and were buried in the church with the honour due to them as royal children and innocents of Christ. He brought also with him very many precious vessels of King Ædwin, and among them a large gold cross, and a gold chalice consecrated for the ministry of the altar, which up to the present time are still preserved and shown in the church of Canterbury.

At which time, the church of Hrof had no pastor, because Romanus its prelate, having been sent as legate to Pope Honorius by the archbishop Justus, was drowned in the waves of the Italian sea, and on this account the above-named Paulinus, at the request of Archbishop Honorius and King Eadbald, undertook and held the charge of it, until he himself, at his appointed time, ascended to the celestial kingdom with the fruit of his glorious labour. In which church also, at his death, he left the pall which he had received from the pope of Rome.

¹ Ædilberga built a monastery at Liming which was called St. Mildred's. She there took the veil, and ended her life.

² The son of Clothaire, and grandson of Chilperic, whose brother Chariberct was the father of Bercta the mother of Ædilberga, who was therefore Dægberect's second cousin.

He had left, moreover, in his church at York, James the deacon, a man in all respects ecclesiastical and holy, who remaining a long time after in that church, rescued great spoil from the old enemy, by teaching and baptizing: by whose name the village where he chiefly dwelt, near Cataracta, is called even to this day¹. Who, being very skilful in singing in the church², when peace had after a while been restored in the province, and the number of the faithful had been increased, began also to instruct many in church-singing; according to the manner of the Romans or Cantuarii: and being an old man and full of days, in the words of Scripture, went the way of his fathers.

¹ Now Akeburg. (Smith.)

² St. Gregory substituted the Gregorian chants for the more florid music before in use. Augustine had instituted this in the Kentish Church, and James the deacon taught this in the Northumbrian Church. *Joh. Diacon. Vita Greg. xi. 6, 7.*

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

How the first successors of King Ædwin betrayed the faith of their nation ; and, after a while, Oswald, a most Christian king, restored each kingdom.

BUT when Ædwin had been slain in battle, the son of his father's brother Ælfric, by name Osric, received in his place the kingdom of the Deiri, to which province his line of descent belonged, and in which he began to reign, who, by the preaching of Paulinus, had been initiated in the sacraments of the faith. Moreover, the son of Ædilfrid, by name Æanfrid, received the kingdom of the Bernicii, for into these two provinces the nation of the Northumbrians was formerly divided¹, having derived from that province the origin of his race and kingdom. For, during the whole time that Ædwin reigned, the sons of the aforesaid King Ædilfrid who had reigned before him, together with a great number of noble

¹ Deifyr (Deora rice), Latinized into Deira, extended from the Humber to the Tyne, and Berneich (Beorna, or Beornica, rice), afterwards Bernicia, from the Tyne to the Clyde. Lappenberg, i. 117. (Moberly.) According to others, the Tees was the boundary of the two kingdoms. The Tweed and the Frith of Forth have each been named as the northern boundary of Bernicia. The boundaries probably varied at different times. Sir Walter Scott states that Edwin built the castle of Edinburgh, which was so called (Edwinsburgh) after him ; Hist. of Scotland, vol. i. ch. ii.

youths, were in exile among the Scots or Picts, and there having received catechetical instruction according to the doctrine of the Scots, were renewed also with the grace of baptism. And when, the king their enemy being dead, they were permitted to return to their country, the eldest of them whom I have spoken of, Eanfrid, received the kingdom of the Bernicii. Each of these kings, when he obtained the insignia¹ of an earthly kingdom, abandoned and anathematized the sacraments of the celestial kingdom, in which he had been initiated, and rendered himself up to be polluted and destroyed by the old pollutions of his idolatry.

And after no long time, Cædwalla, king of the Britons, slew them both, with impious hand, but with just vengeance. And first, indeed, in the next summer, when Osric had rashly besieged him in the municipal town², sallying forth suddenly with all his forces, he destroyed him, together with his army, unprepared. Afterwards, when for a whole year he had not been content to hold the provinces of the Northumbrians as a victorious king, but had destroyed them as a raging tyrant, and had lacerated them with tragic slaughter, at length he doomed with the like fate Eanfrid³ who came unadvisedly to him with twelve chosen soldiers to sue for peace. That unfortunate year remains even unto this day hateful to all good men, as well on account of the apostasy of the kings of the Angles, who renounced the sacraments of the faith, as also on account of the mad tyranny of the British king.

¹ *infulas*.

² Eburacum, or York, called a 'municipium' by Aurelius Victor in his *History of the Cæsars*, xx. 27.

³ 'Battle between Cathlon and Anfraith who was beheaded.' Tigernach, *ad a. 632*. (Moberly.)

Wherefore it has seemed fit to all who have computed the times of the kings, to abolish from among them the memory of the perfidious kings, and to assign that year to the reign of the following king, that is, Oswald¹, a man beloved by God, who after the death of his brother Eanfrid, came by surprise with an army, small indeed, but fortified by the faith of Christ, upon the wicked king² of the Britons and destroyed him, together with those immense forces which he boasted that nothing could resist, in the place which in the tongue of the Angles is called Denisesburna, that is Denise-brook³.

CHAPTER II.

How by the wood of the Cross, which the same king had erected when about to fight against the barbarians, among innumerable miracles of healings, a certain youth was cured of the affliction of a broken arm.

MOREOVER, the place is shown even to this day, and held in great veneration, where Oswald, when about to engage in this battle, erected the sign of the Holy Cross³, and on

¹ Oswald was either the second (Saxon Chronicle) or fourth (Florence) son of Ædilfrid and Acha the sister of Ædwin.

² Supposed to be Dilston, near Hexham, in Northumberland. Hussey, however, remarks that Dilston is south of the wall, whereas Bede says (Chap. ii.) that the place of the battle was near the wall, to the north. Nennius says, 'Ipse est Osuuald Lamnguin ('white hands,' or 'white blade'); ipse occidit Catgublaun (Cæduallam) regem Guenedotæ regionis in bello Catscaul cum magna clade exercitus sui.' Nenn. 64, ed. Stevens. Catscaul may be from the Welsh Cath-ys-gual, 'bellum infra murum.' (Moberly.)

³ In the archives of Durham are several writings with the ancient seal of St. Cuthbert attached to them, having the head of St. Oswald on one side, and a Cross on the other.

bended knees besought the Lord that He would succour his worshippers with celestial help, being in so great a necessity. In short, it is reported that the cross having been hastily made, and a pit prepared in which it was to be placed, he himself, glowing with faith, seized it, and placed it in the pit, and held it upright with both hands, until, the soil having been heaped up by the soldiers, it was fixed in the earth. And when this was done, raising his voice high, he cried to all the army, 'Let us all bend our knees, and join in beseeching the omnipotent, living, and true God, that he will defend us by His mercy from a haughty and fierce enemy; for He knows that we have undertaken a just war for the safety of our nation.' All did as he had commanded, and so, at the beginning of dawn, marching against the enemy, they gained the victory, as their faith deserved. In the place of which prayer numberless virtues of healings are known to have been displayed, to wit, in token and in memory of the king's faith. For even to this day, many are wont to cut out splinters¹ from the wood of the Holy Cross, which they put into water, and sick men or cattle drinking of, or sprinkled with, that water, are presently restored to health.

That place is called, in the tongue of the Angles, Hefenfelth², which may be rendered in Latin 'Cœlestis Campus,' which name it anciently received by a sure presage of future events; signifying, forsooth, that there the heavenly trophy would be erected, the heavenly victory begun, and heavenly

¹ astulas.

² 'Heofenfeld,' Saxon Version. Smith says that about a mile beyond Bingfield to the north is Hallington, anciently Havenfelth.

miracles be wrought to this day. The place, moreover, is near that wall towards the north, with which the Romans formerly girt the whole of Britain from sea to sea, to ward off the attacks of the barbarians, as I have said above¹. In which place, to wit, the brothers of the church of Hagustald², which is not far distant, have for a long time made it their custom to come every year on the day before that on which the same King Oswald was killed, and to keep vigils for the salvation of his soul, and having sung very many thanksgiving psalms, to offer for him in the morning the sacrifice of the holy oblation. Who also, on the increase of this good custom, have lately built a church there, and made the place more sacred and honourable in the estimation of all. And this not undeservedly, because no sign, as far as we can discover, of the Christian faith, no church, no altar was erected throughout all the nation of the Bernicii, before that this new leader in war, the devotion of his faith dictating it, set up this standard of the sacred Cross, when about to fight against a most inhuman enemy.

Nor is it out of place to narrate one miracle of virtue out of many which have been wrought at this Cross. A certain one of the brothers of the church of Hagustald, by name Bothelm, who is even still living, a few years ago, whilst by chance he was incautiously walking on the ice at night, suddenly fell down and broke his arm, and began to be afflicted with a most distressing pain in the fractured part, so that he could not even raise his arm to his mouth at all, the

¹ Bk. I. Chap. xii.

² Hagustaldesham, Saxon Chronicle; Extoldesham, Simeon of Durham. Axelodunum, now Hexham.

pain preventing him. Who when one morning he had heard that one of the brothers intended to go up to the place of the same Holy Cross, asked him to bring him, when he returned, a piece of that revered wood, saying that he believed that thereby, through the Lord's gift, he might obtain a cure. The other did as he was requested, and returning towards evening, when the brothers were already sitting at table, he presented to him some of the old moss with which the surface of the wood was covered. And when, as he sat at table, he had not at hand wherein to lay up the gift brought to him, he put it into his bosom. And when he retired to rest, forgetting to lay it aside, he let it remain in his bosom. But at midnight, on awaking, he felt something cold lying by his side, and having moved his hand to search what it was, found his arm and hand as whole as if they had never had so great an injury.

CHAPTER III.

How the same king, asking a bishop of the Scottish nation, received Aidan, and gave the same the see of a bishopric in the isle of Lindisfarne.

THE same Oswald, then, presently when he received the kingdom, desiring that the whole nation over which he had begun to rule should be made to partake of the grace of the Christian faith, of which he had made a most satisfactory trial in vanquishing the barbarians, sent to the elders of the Scots, among whom he himself when in exile had received the sacrament of baptism, together with those soldiers who were

with him, asking that a prelate might be sent to him, by whose teaching and ministry the nation of the Angles over whom he reigned might both learn the advantages and receive the sacraments of the Lord's faith. Nor was it long before he obtained what he requested; for he received Bishop Aidan¹, a man of the greatest mildness and piety and moderation, and having a zeal of God, although not fully according to knowledge. For, according to the custom of his nation, of which I have often made mention, he was wont to keep the Lord's day of the paschal feast from the fourteenth to the twentieth day of the moon². For in this order the northern province of the Scots, and all the nation of the Picts, at that time, still celebrated the Lord's paschal feast, considering that they followed, in this keeping of it, the writings of the holy and praiseworthy father Anatolius³. Which whether it be true every skilful person easily perceives. Furthermore, the nations of the Scots which dwelt in the southern parts of the island of Hibernia had already long since learnt, by the admonition of the prelate of the apostolic see⁴, to observe the paschal feast according to the canonical usage.

The king, therefore, gave to the bishop, on his arrival, the place of an episcopal see, in the island of Lindisfarne⁵, where

¹ In Chap. xxvi. Bede gives A.D. 664 as the thirtieth year of the Scottish Episcopate in Northumbria. It follows from what he has said that the coming of Aidan could not have been before A.D. 635.

² 'luna,' equivalent to 'dies lunæ.'

³ Bishop of Laodicea about A.D. 270. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. vii. 32.

⁴ See Bk. II. Chap. xix.

⁵ Now Holy Island, situated off the coast of Northumberland. It was called Medcaut by the Britons. Aidan, Finan, Tuda, and Cuthbert, together with other prelates of the same church, were buried there.

he himself desired to have it. Which place, to wit, by the flow and ebb of the tide, is daily twice surrounded with the waters of the sea, like an island, and twice is rendered contiguous to the land by the shore being left dry. The king also, listening humbly and willingly to his admonitions in all things, took care with much diligence to build up and extend the Church of Christ in his kingdom: where the following most delightful sight was often seen; that while the prelate, who had not perfectly learnt the tongue of the Angles, was preaching the Gospel, the king himself stood forth as an interpreter of the celestial word to his leaders and ministers, because, forsooth, he had already fully learnt the tongue of the Scots during the long period of his exile. From that time, more began to come daily to Britain from the region of the Scots, and with great devotion to preach the word of the faith to those provinces of the Angles over which King Oswald reigned; and those among them who had received the order of priest ministered the grace of baptism to the believing. Churches were therefore built¹ in various places; the people rejoicing flocked together to hear the word; possessions and lands were given by royal donation for the founding of monasteries; the young children of the Angles were taught by Scottish preceptors; nor were more advanced studies and the observance of regular discipline neglected.

For those who came to preach were chiefly monks. Aidan himself, the bishop, was a monk, being of the island

¹ Probably of wood. The Northern Irish, however, at an early period, erected buildings of stone, without cement, thus resembling the Cyclopean or Pelasgic edifices.

which is called Hii¹, the monastery of which had for a long time the preeminence of almost all those of the northern Scots and all those of the Picts, and had the chief direction of their people: which island, to wit, appertains indeed to the sovereignty of Britain, being divided from it by a small strait, but had been long since given by the Picts who inhabit those regions of Britain to the Scottish monks, because they had received the faith of Christ by their preaching.

CHAPTER IV.

How the nation of the Picts received the faith of Christ.

FOR in the year of the Lord's incarnation 565, when, after Justinianus, Justinus the younger received the government of the Roman empire, a presbyter and abbot, by name Columba, remarkable for his monastic habit and life, came from Ireland to Britain, to preach the word of God to the provinces of the northern Picts, that is, to those who are separated by lofty and jagged ranges of mountains² from the southern regions. For the southern Picts³, who have their abodes on this side the same mountains, had long before, as they

¹ Iona. The Annals of Tigernach and Ulster here differ from Bede, and state that Iona was given to Columba by Conan son of Comgall, king of Dalriada, who died A.D. 574. Ann. Tigern. A.D. 574; Ann. Ult. A.D. 573 (574).

² The Grampians. The highest range of which is still called Drumalbin, i.e. 'dorsum Albionis.' (Smith.)

³ Q'Connor denies that Nynias converted the Picts, on these grounds: 'Gallogidia, ubi ecclesiam condidit Ninianus—pars erat provinciæ dictæ a Valentino Valentia, quam Romani et Brittones adhuc tuebantur et incolebant.'

say, relinquished the error of idolatry and received the true faith, by the preaching of the Word to them by Bishop Nynias¹, a most reverend and holy man, of the nation of the Britons, who had been regularly taught at Rome the faith and mysteries of the truth, whose episcopal see, remarkable for a church dedicated to St. Martin the bishop, where he himself, together with many more saints, rests in the body, is now in the possession of the nation of the Angles. Which place belongs to the province of the Bernicii, and is commonly called *Ad Candidam Casam*², because he had there built a church of stone, after a fashion unusual among the Britons.

Moreover, Columba came to Britain when Bridius³, the son of Meilochon, a most powerful king, was reigning over the Picts, in the ninth year of his reign, and converted that nation by his words and example to the faith of Christ; wherefore

Script. Hib. ii. p. 87. But, if Bede's previous narrative is true, the Britons must have been driven from this region, when the wall was built, at least twenty years before the coming of Nynias. (Hussey.)

¹ Nynias is said to have gone to Rome in the time of Pope Damasus, A.D. 370. He was ordained bishop for the Britons, by Siricius, A.D. 394. On his return, he visited St. Martin, bishop of Tours, to whom he dedicated his church. Usher dates his arrival at Whitherne, A.D. 412.

² Hwiterne, Sax. Chron. Now Whitherne, or Whitehorn, at the south-eastern part of Wigtonshire.

³ This king is mentioned by Adomnan in his *Life of Columba*, ii. 34, 36, 43. He is called by Tigernach Bruidi M^c Maelcon, ad a. 560, and said by O'Connor to have begun to reign A.D. 557, which is inconsistent with Bede's giving the ninth year of his reign as the date of the coming of Nynias. Bridius was succeeded by Garnard, who founded the collegiate church of Abernethy; who was succeeded by Constantine, who founded the church of Dunkeld. In the reign of Drunsken, the eighth from Constantine, the Pictish dominion ceased. (Smith.)

he received the aforesaid island from them into his possession, for the building of a monastery. For it is not large, but contains land of about five families, according to the reckoning of the Angles. His successors hold it even to this day, and he himself also was buried there¹, having died at the age of seventy-seven years, about thirty-two years after he came to Britain to preach. Moreover, before he came to Britain, he had built a noble monastery in Ireland, which is called in the language of the Scots *Dearmach*², that is, The Field of Oaks, from the great number of oaks there. From both which monasteries very many monasteries were founded by his disciples, both in Britain and Ireland, among all which the same insular monastery in which he himself rests bodily, holds the chief place.

Moreover, the island is wont to have always an abbot, who is a presbyter, for its ruler, to whose jurisdiction both all the province and the bishops also themselves, after an unusual order, are bound to be subject³, according to the

¹ According to Tigernach, he died on Whitsun Day, June 9, A.D. 596, being then seventy-six years old. This is confirmed by Adomnan, iii. 22, 23.

² Now Durrugh, in King's County. See Adomnan, i. 3.

³ It appears that the abbot gave bishops the precedence in the celebration of religious rites. Adomnan, i. 26. 'Alio in tempore quidam de Numinensium provincia proselytus ad sanctum venit, qui se in quantum potuit humiliter gessit, quod nullus sciret quod episcopus esset: sed tamen hoc sanctum non potuit latere. Nam alia die Dominica, a sancto jussus Christi corpus ex more conficere, sanctum advocat, ut simul quasi duo presbyteri Dominicum panem frangerent. Sanctus proinde ad altarium accedens, repente intuitus faciem ejus, sic eum compellat: "Benedicat te Christus, frater, hunc solus episcopus episcopali ritu frange panem. Nunc scimus quod sis episcopus. Quare huc usque te occultare conatus es, ut tibi a nobis debita non redderetur veneratio?" Quo audito sancti verbo humilis peregrinus valde stupefactus

example of him who was their first teacher, who was not a bishop, but a presbyter and monk ; concerning whose life and words some writings are reported to be in the possession of his disciples. But whatsoever he was himself, we hold this as certain concerning him, that he left successors remarkable for their great continence, and divine love, and regular discipline : as to the time indeed of the chief festival they followed doubtful cycles, since, as they were situated far beyond the world, no one had brought them the synodal decrees for the observance of Easter, only they diligently practised those works of piety and chastity which they were able to learn in the prophetical, evangelical, and apostolic writings. Moreover, this manner of keeping Easter continued among them for no short time, that is, for 150 years, until the year of the Lord's incarnation 715¹.

But at that time, a most reverend and holy father and priest, Ecgberct, came to them from the nation of the Angles, who had long been an exile in Ireland for the sake of Christ, and was both most learned in the Scriptures and greatly noted for the perfection of his life ; and by him they were corrected and brought to the true and canonical day of the paschal feast ; which, however, even previously they did not always celebrate on the fourteenth day of the moon, with the Jews, as some thought, but indeed on a Sunday, although not in the proper week. For as Christians, they knew that the Lord's resurrection, which took place on the first day of the week, always ought to be celebrated on the first day of the week,

Christum in sancto veneratus est, et qui erant præsentes nimis admirati glorificaverunt Deum.'

¹ The last year of the old system was A.D. 715. See Bk. V. Chap. xxii.

but, as barbarians and rustics, they had not properly learnt when that same first day of the week, which is now called the Lord's Day, should come. But because they had not failed to glow with the grace of charity, they deserved to receive perfect knowledge of this thing also, according to the promise of the apostle, who says, 'And if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.' Concerning which I must speak more fully in what follows, in its proper place.

CHAPTER V.

Concerning the life of Bishop Aidan.

FROM this island, then, and from the college of these monks, Aidan was sent¹ to instruct the province of the Angles in Christ, having received the degree of bishop. At which time, Segeni², abbot and presbyter, presided over the same monastery. Whence, among other examples of living, he left a most salutary example of abstinence as well as continence to the clergy; and his doctrine was most chiefly commended to all by the circumstance that he himself taught not otherwise than he and his followers lived. For he cared not to seek anything or to love anything of this world. All things which were given him by kings or rich men of the world,

¹ Since it appears from Bk. III. Chap. xxvi. that A.D. 644 was the thirtieth year of the episcopal government of Northumbria by the Scots, it follows that Aidan must have been consecrated bishop of Lindisfarne in A.D. 634 or 635. (Stevenson.)

² The fourth abbot from Columba. Baithan was the second, Virgnous or Fergnaus the third.

he delighted presently to dispense to the poor whom he met with. He was wont to go about through all places, both in town and in country, on foot, and not on horseback, unless any urgent necessity compelled him; in order that wheresoever he beheld in his walks any, whether rich or poor, he might immediately turn aside to them, and either invite them to the sacrament of receiving the faith, if they were infidels; or, if they were believers, strengthen them in the same faith, and excite them, both by his words and deeds, to alms and the performance of good works.

Moreover, his life was so far different from the slothfulness of our times, that all who walked with him, whether tonsured or laics, were obliged to study¹, that is, either to give attention to reading the Scriptures, or to learning psalms. This was the daily work of himself and also of all who were with him, to whatsoever place they went. And if, perchance, it happened, which however happened rarely, that he was invited to the king's entertainment, he went with one or two of the clergy, and when he had taken a little refreshment, he made haste to go forth to read with his attendants, or to pray. Instructed by his example, the religious men and women of that time made it a custom throughout the whole year, with the exception of the relaxation of the fifty days after Easter, to keep a fast, until the ninth hour, on the fourth and sixth days of the week. Never through fear or respect did he fail to reprove the rich, if they had offended in aught, but corrected them with a severe rebuke. He was

¹ meditari. Rule of St. Isidore, chap. vi. 'Post vespertinum autem, congregatis patribus, oportet vel aliquid meditari, vel de aliquibus divinæ lectionis quæstionibus disputare.'

never wont to give any money to the powerful of this world, but only food, if he chanced to entertain any of them ; on the contrary, those gifts of money which were bestowed on him by the rich, he either distributed for the use of the poor, as I have said, or dispensed for the ransoming of those who had been unjustly sold. In short, he made many, whom he had redeemed by paying a ransom, his own disciples after they had been ransomed, and by his teaching and instruction advanced them even to the degree of priest.

Moreover, they relate that when King Oswald asked for a prelate from the province of the Scots, to minister to himself and his people the word of faith, there was at first another ¹ man sent of more austere disposition, who, when after preaching for some time to the nation of the Angles, he made no progress, and was not listened to willingly by the people, returned to his country, and related in the assembly of the elders, that he had not been able to effect anything in teaching the nation to which he had been sent, on account of their being intractable men, and of a harsh and barbarous disposition. Then they, as is reported, began to hold a great debate in council as to what was to be done, being desirous to afford to the nation those means of salvation which they were asked to confer, but grieving because the preacher whom they had sent had not been received. Then said Aidan, for he also was present in the council, to that priest concerning whom the meeting was held, ‘ It seems to me, brother, that you have been too hard with your unlearned hearers, and have not afforded them, according to the apostolic teaching, first the milk of easier doctrine, until

¹ Called by Hector Boethius, Bk. ix., ‘ Corman.’

being nourished by degrees by the Word of God, they should be capable of receiving the more perfect, and of performing the sublimer precepts of God.' Which being heard, the faces and eyes of all who sat there were turned towards him, and they earnestly discussed what he had said, and decreed that he himself was worthy of the episcopate, and ought to be sent to teach the unbelieving and unlearned, since above all things he was proved to be endued with the grace of discretion, which is the mother of virtues; and accordingly they ordained him, and sent him to preach. And he, in course of time, as he had before appeared to be adorned with the guidance of discretion, so afterwards exhibited the other virtues also.

CHAPTER VI.

Concerning the religion and wonderful piety of King Oswald.

KING OSWALD, therefore, having, together with that nation of the Angles over which he ruled, been instructed by the teaching of this bishop, not only learned to hope for the kingdom of heaven, which was unknown to his progenitors, but also obtained more kingdoms on earth than any of his ancestors, from the same one Lord who made heaven and earth. In short, he brought under his dominion all the nations and provinces of Britain, which are divided into four languages, that is, those of the Britons¹, Picts, Scots, and Angles.

Being raised to this height of sovereignty, he never-

¹ The Britons appear to have ceased to strive with the Angles for supremacy after the death of Cædwalla. This is stated by Geoffry of Monmouth.

theless, which is wonderful to relate, was always humble, kind, and bountiful to the poor and strangers. In short, it is reported that once, when on the holy day of the Passover, he had sat down to dinner with the aforesaid bishop, and a silver dish was placed before him on the table, full of royal dainties, and they were now just about to stretch forth their hands to bless the bread, there entered on a sudden a servant of his, to whom the charge of relieving the poor was delegated, and told the king that a very great multitude of poor people had come from all parts, and were sitting in the streets, asking some alms of the king, who presently commanded the meat which was set before him to be carried out to the poor, and even that the dish should be broken up and divided piecemeal among them. Seeing which, the bishop who sat by him, being delighted with such a deed of piety, seized his right hand, and said, 'May this hand never wither.' Which also happened, according to the wish expressed in his benediction. For when he was killed in battle, his hands being cut off, together with the arms, from the rest of his body, it came to pass that unto this day they remain uncorrupted. In short, they are kept inclosed in a silver casket, in the church of St. Peter, in the royal city¹, which is called by the name of a former queen, Bebb, and are venerated with due honour by all.

¹ Bebbanburgh, now Bamborough. It is said to have been founded by the Northumbrian king Ida, Saxon Chronicle, in A.D. 547. Nennius states that it was so called from Bebb, the wife of Ædilfrid, and that the Britons called it Dinguaroy, or Dinguayrdum. 'Eadfered Flesaur (the devastator) dedit uxori suæ Dinguaroy, quæ vocatur Bebb, et de nomine suæ uxoris suscepit nomen, id est Bebbanburch.' Nenn. 63. ed. Stevens.

By the zeal of this king, the provinces of the Deiri and Bernicii, which up to that time were at variance with each other, were joined together in mutual peace, and, as it were, in one people. Moreover, he was the nephew of King Ædwin, by his sister Acha¹, and it was fit that so great a predecessor should have, of his own kindred blood, such an heir of both his religion and kingdom.

CHAPTER VII.

How the province of the West Saxons received the Word of God by the preaching of Birinus ; and concerning his successors Agilberct and Leutherius.

AT that time² the nation of the West Saxons, who were anciently called Gevissæ, received the faith of Christ in the reign of Cynigils³, by the preaching of the Word to them by Birinus, the bishop, who had come to Britain by the advice of Pope Honorius, having promised, indeed, in his presence, that he would sow the seeds of the holy faith in the inmost parts beyond the dominion of the Angles, whither no teacher had gone before. Wherefore also, by the order of

¹ Wife of Ædilfrid. She had, besides Eanfred and Oswald, five sons (see note to p. 131) and one daughter, Æbba, who was abbess of Coldingham. (Smith.)

² Authors are at variance respecting the year of the coming of Birinus. The Saxon Chronicle is here most to be depended on, not only because it is a better authority than the other historians after Bede's time, but because it particularly deserves credit in relation to the affairs of the West Saxons, since it was written, as Wharton observes, by an inhabitant of that kingdom. (Smith.)

³ Cynigils was the son of Ceolric, and nephew of Ceolwulf, who were said to be the great-grandsons of Cerdic. He reigned from A.D. 611 to 643.

the same pontiff, he was consecrated by Asterius¹, bishop of Genua, for the degree of the episcopate². But on his coming to Britain, and going first among the nation of the Gevissæ, when he found all there extreme pagans, he thought it of more use to preach the Word there, than to proceed further and inquire who there were to whom it would be his duty to preach.

Therefore, whilst he was preaching the Gospel in the aforesaid province, when the king himself, having been catechetically instructed, was washed in the font of baptism³, together with his people, it happened at that time that Oswald, the most holy and victorious king of the Northumbrians, was present, and received him on his coming forth from the laver⁴, and by an alliance most delightful and pleasing to God, adopted for his son him who had before been dedicated to God by a new birth, and whose daughter he was about to take to wife. Moreover, the two kings⁵ gave to the same bishop the city which is called Dorcic⁶, to establish there

¹ Asterius was bishop of Milan, but resided at Genoa, where he died, A.D. 640.

² It is remarked by Pagi, § 3, A.D. 635, that Birinus was consecrated bishop without being appointed to any particular see. (Stevenson.)

³ The baptism of Cynigils by Birinus is still represented by an old font in Winchester Cathedral. (Giles.)

⁴ The practice, which still prevails, of the godmother receiving the newly-baptized infant from the hands of the minister, is probably a relic of this ancient custom.

⁵ Oswald appears to have been the superior lord, Cynigils the subregulus.

⁶ In the Saxon Chronicle Dorceceastre, now Dorchester in Oxfordshire, at the confluence of the Thame and Isis. The region afterwards was joined to Mercia. The episcopal see continued here until the time of William I., when it was removed by Bishop Remigius to Lincoln, A.D. 1088.

an episcopal see; where having built and dedicated churches, and called many people to the Lord by his pious labour, he departed to the Lord, and was buried in the same city; and many years after, when Hædde held the bishopric, he was removed thence to the city of Venta¹, and was buried in the church of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul.

Moreover, on the king's death, his son Coinwalch² succeeded to the kingdom, who refused to receive the faith and sacraments of the heavenly kingdom, and not long after lost also the power of his earthly kingdom. For having repudiated the sister of Penda, king of the Mercians, whom he had married, he took another wife, and having been on that account invaded by war and deprived of his kingdom by him, he departed to the king of the East Angles, whose name was Anna³, at whose court living in exile three years, he learned and received the true faith. For the king with whom he lived as an exile was a good man, and blest with a good and pious offspring, as I shall hereafter show.

When, however, Coinwalch was restored to his kingdom, a certain pontiff, by name Agilberct⁴, came into the province

¹ Venta Belgarum, to distinguish it from Venta Icenorum, Caistor near Norwich, and Venta Silurum, Caergwent. It was called by the Britons *Caer Gwent*, and by the Saxons *Wintonceastre*, now Winchester. The minster or 'old church,' was 'hallowed in the name of St. Peter' by Cenwalh, in A.D. 643.

² Coinwalch, or Cenwalh (Saxon Version), succeeded A.D. 643. He was driven from his kingdom A.D. 645, and restored A.D. 648. *Sax. Chron.*, *Flor. Worc.*

³ Father-in-law of Earconberct, king of Kent. He died A.D. 654.

⁴ Ægelbyrht of Galwalum. *Saxon Chronicle*. He was made bishop of the West Saxons on Birinus' death, in A.D. 650.

from Ireland, a Gaul indeed by nation, but having then lived a long time in Ireland for the purpose of reading the Scriptures ; and joined himself to the king, taking on himself, of his own accord, the ministry of preaching. The king observing his erudition and industry, asked him to accept an episcopal see there, and remain as bishop of his people. And he, assenting to his request, for many years presided over that same nation with sacerdotal authority. At length the king, who knew only the language of the Saxons, being thoroughly tired of his barbarous dialect, introduced into the province another bishop who spoke his own language, by name Vini, who also had been ordained in Gaul ; and dividing the province into two dioceses, he gave an episcopal see to this last, in the city of Venta, which is called by the nation of the Saxons Vintancæstir. Whereupon Agilberct being greatly offended, because the king did this without asking his advice, returned¹ to Gaul, and having accepted the episcopate of the city of Paris, died there old and full of days. Moreover, not many years after his departure from Britain, Vini was expelled by the same king from his episcopate, and departing to the king of the Mercians, by name Wulfhere, bought with a price² of the same the see of the city of London, and remained bishop of it to the end of his life. And so the province of the West Saxons was for no short time without a prelate.

¹ A.D. 660, Saxon Chronicle. As, however, he was present at the synod of Whitby, A.D. 664, it was most likely that he did not return to France before that year.

² 'Unde post mortem in serie episcoporum Londinensium non meruit recenseri.' M. Westm. a. 666.

During which time, also, the aforesaid king of that nation, having been very often afflicted by his enemies with most heavy losses to his kingdom, at length recalled to memory that his unfaithfulness had been the cause of his banishment before from the kingdom, and that the acknowledgment of the faith of Christ had caused his restoration to the kingdom; and understood that his province also, being then destitute of a pontiff, was justly in like manner deprived of Divine aid. He sent therefore emissaries into Gaul to Agilberct, entreating him, with humble apologies, that he would return to the episcopate of his nation. But he excused himself, and affirmed that he was unable to come thither, because he was held bound by the episcopate of his own city and diocese; however, that he might give him some assistance who so urgently requested it, he sent thither in his stead the presbyter Leutherius, his nephew, who, if he wished it, might be ordained bishop for him, saying that he himself judged him worthy of the episcopate. The people and the king received him honourably, and asked Theodore, who was at that time archbishop of the Church of Canterbury, that he might be consecrated bishop for them: and he having been consecrated¹ in that city, alone for many years administered the episcopate of the Gevissæ, by synodical sanction, with careful governance.

¹ A.D. 670, Saxon Chronicle.

CHAPTER VIII.

How Earconberct, king of the Kentish people, ordered the idols to be destroyed; and concerning his daughter Earcongota, and his kinswoman Ædilberga, virgins consecrated to God.

IN the year of the Lord's incarnation 640¹, Eadbald, king of the Cantuarii, departed this life, and left the government of the kingdom to his son Earconberct²; which he received and held most nobly for twenty-four years and some months. He was the first of the English kings who by his supreme authority commanded the idols to be forsaken and destroyed throughout the whole of his kingdom, and also that the fast of forty days should be observed. And in order that these things should not easily be contemned by any one, he appointed suitable and condign punishments for transgressors. His daughter Earcongota³, a child worthy of her parent, was a virgin of great virtues, serving the Lord in a monastery, which was built by a most noble abbess named Fara⁴, in the region of the Franks, in the place which is called In Brige⁵. For at that time, there being not as yet many monasteries built in the region of the Angles, many were wont, for the sake of monastic

¹ Jan. 22. Thorn, p. 1769.

² Earconberct reigned to July 14, A.D. 664.

³ For her biography, see Surius, vii. 572; Mabill. Ann. Benedd. xiii. 6, xiv. 38.

⁴ Or Burgundofara. Jonas, a monk of Bobbio, wrote a life of her. See Mabillon, Ann. Bened. x. 49—xiv. 37.

⁵ Now Brie. The convent was called Eboriacum, or Faræmonasterium, Faremoustier. Gall. Christ. viii. 1700

conversation, to go from Britain to the monasteries of the Franks or of Gaul; and they also sent their daughters to the same to be instructed, and to be wedded to the heavenly spouse, chiefly in the monasteries of Brige and Cale¹, and of Andilegum². Among whom was Sæthryd³, the daughter of the wife of Anna, the king of the East Angles, of whom I have made mention above; and Ædilberg⁴, natural⁵ daughter of the same king; both of whom, although foreigners, were for the merit of their virtues made abbesses of the same monastery of Brige. The elder daughter of this king, Sexburg, the wife of Earconberct king of the Cantuarii, had a daughter, Earcongota, concerning whom I am about to speak.

Moreover, many works of virtues and signal miracles of this virgin dedicated to God are even to this day wont to be related by the inhabitants of that place. But let it suffice for me to say something briefly concerning only her departure, when she went to the celestial kingdom. On the approach of the day of her summons, she began to visit the cells of the infirm handmaids of Christ in the monastery, and chiefly of those who were either advanced in age, or

¹ Now Chelles, four miles from Paris. The convent was founded by Clotilde (Chrodechildis) wife of Clovis I., and restored and enlarged by Bathilde, wife of Clovis II. Mabillon, iv. 53, xiv. 54.

² Andely-sur-Seine, about six miles from Rouen. Called *Andeliacum* by Hadrianus Valesius, in the *Notitia Galliarum*. A nunnery was here founded by Clotilde, wife of Clovis I. Gall. Christ. xi. 131.

³ Not mentioned by Florence, who, besides Ædilberga, speaks of Sexburga, Ætheldrida, abbess of Ely, and Withberga, a nun of the same convent.

⁴ Called by the French St. Aubierge.

⁵ i.e. Anna's own, as opposed to his wife's child.

most remarkable for probity of morals ; to the prayers of all of whom humbly commending herself, she concealed not that her death would be very soon, as she had learned by revelation, which revelation, to wit, she said, was after this manner ; that she had seen a troop of men clothed in white enter the same monastery, and that these having been asked by her what they sought, or what they wanted there, answered that they had been sent thither on purpose that they should take with them that golden coin which had come thither from Kent. Moreover, on that very night, in the latter part of which, that is, at daybreak, she passed through the darkness of the present world, and went to dwell in the light above, many of the brothers ¹ of the same monastery, who were in other buildings, related that they then heard clearly the singing together of the minstrel angels and a sound besides as of a very great multitude entering the monastery ; whereupon, having presently gone forth to learn what it was, they saw a very great light sent down from heaven, which conducted that holy soul, freed from the bonds of the flesh, to the eternal joys of the celestial country. They add also other miracles which on that night were divinely displayed in the same monastery, but I leave these things to their proper narrators, and pass on to other matters. The venerated body of the virgin and bride of Christ was buried in the church of the blessed protomartyr Stephen, and it was thought fit three days after that the stone with which the monument was covered should be taken up and put back

¹ According to the constitution of the early monastic establishments, a certain number of monks were deputed to perform the ecclesiastical services of each nunnery. Mabillon, *Ann. Ord. S. Bened.* xi. 10. (Stevenson.)

higher in the same place, and whilst this was being done, a fragrance of such sweetness burst forth from beneath, that it appeared to all the brothers and sisters who stood by as if vaults full of spikenard were opened.

Moreover, her maternal aunt *Ædilberg*, of whom I have spoken, herself also preserved the glory pleasing to God of perpetual virginity in great continence of body, which, as to what virtue it had, became more conspicuous after her death. For when she was abbess, she began to build a church in her monastery in honour of all the apostles, in which she desired her body to be buried. But when the same work was advanced about half way, she was prevented from finishing it, being snatched away by death, and was buried in the very place of the church where she desired: after whose death this building was intermitted for seven years by reason of the brothers taking more care for other things; at the end of which time they determined, on account of the excessive labour, entirely to relinquish the building of the church, but to transfer the bones of the abbess, when they had taken them up from that place, to another church which was finished and dedicated. On opening her sepulchre, they found the body as uncorrupted as it was free from the taint of carnal concupiscence, and so, when it had been washed afresh and clothed with other vestments, they transferred it to the church of the blessed martyr Stephen, whose birthday, to wit, is wont to be celebrated there with great glory on the day of the Nones of July¹.

¹ July 7.

CHAPTER IX.

How in the place in which King Oswald was killed, many miracles of healing were wrought; and how there first the horse of a certain traveller, and afterwards a paralytic girl, were cured.

MOREOVER, Oswald, the most Christian king of the Northumbrians, reigned nine years, that year also being included which the bestial impiety of the king of the Britons and the mad apostasy of the English kings had made detestable. Since, as I have said above, it was determined by the unanimous consent of all, that the name and memory of the apostates should be entirely erased from the catalogue of the Christian kings and no date be assigned to their reign: at the completion of which course of years he was killed in a severe conflict by the same pagan nation and pagan king of the Mercians by whom also his predecessor Ædwin had been killed, in the place which is called in the tongue of the Angles Maserfelth¹, in the thirty-eighth year of his age², on the fifth day of the month of August.

How great his faith towards God, and what the devotion of his mind was, became manifest even after his death by miracles of virtues. For in the place where fighting for his country he was killed by the pagans, even to this day

¹ Oswestry, in Shropshire, seven miles from Shrewsbury, formerly Oswaldstre, called by the Welsh, Croix Osualde. There is also a place named Maserfield, near Winwick, in Lancashire, which claims to be the scene of this battle. Eowa, Penda's brother, the ancestor of Offa, was killed in it.

² 'Oswald had bodily age xxxvii winters.' Saxon Version.

healings of infirm men and cattle cease not to take place. Whence it happened that many carried away the very dust where his body had fallen to the ground, and putting it in water conferred much benefit on their sick by it; which custom, to wit, was so prevalent that by degrees the earth carried thence left a trench, in depth the measure of a man's stature. Nor is it to be wondered at, that the infirm were cured in the place of his death, who, whilst he lived, ceased not to consult for, to give alms to, and to render assistance to the poor. And indeed many miracles of virtues are related to have been done in that place or by the dust of that place, but I have thought it sufficient to mention two only, which I have heard from our ancestors.

It happened no long time after his death that a certain man riding on a horse was travelling near that place, whose horse suddenly began to be tired, to stop, to decline his head towards the earth, and to drop foam from his mouth; and as excessive pain increased he fell to the ground. The rider dismounted, and having laid some straw under him, began to await the hour in which he should either find his beast recovered or leave him dead. But the beast, having been a long time vexed with grievous pain, while he was writhing himself in different directions, suddenly by turning over came to that place where the memorable king died. Without delay, the pain subsiding, he ceased from the frantic contortions of his limbs, and in the customary manner of horses, as if after fatigue, he began to roll himself from side to side, and presently rising up, as though sound in every part, to crop the green herbage with great avidity.

Which having seen, he, as a man of wise understanding,

perceived that there was some wonderful sanctity in this place where the horse was cured, and having set a mark there, he presently mounted his horse, and proceeded to the inn whither he intended to go. When he arrived he found a girl there, a niece of the landlord, who was suffering from a long attack of paralysis; and when the members of the family lamented the severe affliction of the girl in his presence, he began to speak of the place where his horse was cured. What need of many words? Putting her into a cart they brought her to the place, and there laid her down. Then she, having been laid down in the place, slept a little while; and when she awoke, perceiving herself healed of that bodily infirmity, called for water, washed her face herself, arranged her hair, covered her head with a kerchief, and returned on foot in good health with those who had brought her thither.

CHAPTER X.

How the dust of that place prevailed against fire.

AT the same time, there came another person of the nation of the Britons, as they relate, journeying near the very place in which the aforesaid battle was fought, and seeing in one part a spot greener and more beautiful than the rest of the field, began with sagacious mind to conjecture that there could be no other cause of the unusual greenness in that place, but that some man of more holiness than any other in the army had been killed there. He therefore took some of the dust of that earth with him, tying it up in a linen cloth, thinking (as was about to take place) that the same dust

would be profitable for the curing of sick persons; and, proceeding on his journey, came in the evening to a certain village, and entered into a house where the villagers were feasting at supper; and being received by the heads of the house, he himself also sat down with them to the entertainment, hanging up the linen cloth with the dust which he had brought on a post in the wall. And while they were spending a long time in feasting and drinking, with a great fire burning in the midst, it happened that by the sparks flying up, the roof of the house, which was woven with twigs and covered with straw, was filled with sudden flames; which when presently the guests beheld, they were confounded with terror and fled out of doors, not being able to do anything for the house which was burning and already about to be destroyed. The house therefore having been consumed by the flames, the post alone, on which that dust which was tied up hung, remained safe from the fire and untouched. Which virtue being seen they wondered greatly, and enquiring more particularly, they found that the dust had been taken from that place where the blood of King Oswald had been shed. These miracles being far and wide made known and reported, many began daily to frequent that place, and there to receive for themselves and their friends the grace of healings.

CHAPTER XI.

*How a celestial light stood for a whole night over his relics,
and how by them demoniacs were cured.*

AMONG which things I consider that I ought by no means to pass over in silence the virtue and heavenly miracle which

was shown when his bones were found and transferred to the church where they are now preserved. Moreover, this was done by the zeal of Osthryda¹, queen of the Mercians, who was the daughter of his brother, that is, of Oswy, who after him held the sovereignty of the kingdom, as I shall relate in what follows. There is a notable monastery in the province of Lindissis, called Beardaneu², which the same queen and her husband Ædilred greatly loved, venerated, and adorned, in which she desired to lay the honoured bones of her paternal uncle. And when, at the approach of evening, the wain had come in which the same bones were brought to the aforesaid monastery, they who were in the monastery were reluctant to receive them, because, although they knew him to be a saint, yet inasmuch as he was a native of another province and had received the kingdom over them, they retained their inveterate aversion to him even after death³. Whence it came to pass that on that very night the relics which had been brought thither remained out of doors, only a large tent being spread above the wain in which they were. But the showing of a celestial miracle revealed how reve-

¹ Ostrithe, Saxon Chronicle; Osthrithe, Saxon Version. She was sister of Egfrid, and wife of Æthelred, King of Mercia, who succeeded A.D. 675. She was murdered in A.D. 697. Saxon Chronicle.

² Bardney, in Lincolnshire. It formerly contained three hundred monks, and its abbot was called lord of Lindsey. It was destroyed by the Danes A.D. 870, and restored by Walter de Gaunt A.D. 1115. Monast. Angl. i. 623.

³ The Lindisfari looked upon the Northumbrian Oswald as an usurper. Penda of Mercia conquered Lindsey when he slew Oswald, A.D. 642; Oswy, Oswald's brother, reconquered it, slaying Penda at the Winwæd, A.D. 655; Wulfhere of Mercia again took it from Oswy, A.D. 657; and Egfrid of Northumberland from Wulfhere, about A.D. 678. Bk. IV. Chap. xii.

rently they were to be received by all the faithful, for during the whole of that night a column of light reaching from that wain up to heaven stood conspicuous to almost all places in the province of Lindissa. Whereupon, when it was morning, the brothers of that monastery, who had refused them the day before, began earnestly themselves to request that the same relics sacred and beloved of God might be deposited with them. They put, therefore, the bones, when they had washed them, into a chest which they had prepared for this purpose, and deposited them in the church with becoming honour; and that the royal person of the sainted man might have an eternal memorial, they placed his banner composed of gold and purple upon his tomb, and poured the water itself in which they had washed the bones in a corner of the sacristy; from which time it happened that the very earth which received the revered water had the effect of salutary grace for expelling demons from the bodies possessed by them.

At length, in course of time, when the aforesaid queen was staying in the same monastery, there came to salute her a certain venerable abbess, who is living even at this day, by the name of Ædilhild, the sister of those holy men Ædilwin¹ and Aldewin, the former of whom was bishop in the province of Lindissis, the latter abbot in the monastery which is called Peartaneu², not far from which she also

¹ Bishop of Sidnacester, afterwards removed to Lincoln. (Giles.)

² 'Portanea,' Saxon Version. Parteney had a cell belonging to the abbey of Bardney. MS. Register of Croyland, '... duas illas cellas de Partenay et de Skendelby ad dictum monasterium (de Bardeney) pertinentes.' Monast. Angl. i. 634. See Bk. II. Chap. xvi.

had a monastery. When, therefore, on coming thither she conversed with the queen, and, among other things, the discourse turned upon Oswald, she said that she herself had seen on that night a light above his relics reaching as high as heaven. The queen added that many sick persons had been already healed by the dust of the pavement on which the water of that washing was poured out. The abbess requested that a portion of the salutary dust might be given to her, and receiving some she deposited it tied up in a cloth in a casket, and returned home. Moreover, some time having elapsed, when she was in her own monastery there came thither a certain guest who was wont often in the hours of the night to be on a sudden most grievously vexed by an unclean spirit. When, after having been kindly received, he had laid his limbs on a bed after supper, being suddenly seized by the devil, he began to cry out, to gnash his teeth, to foam, and writhe his limbs with divers motions. And when he could neither be held nor bound by anyone, the servant ran, and knocking at the door told the abbess of it. And she, opening the door of the monastery, went out herself with one of the nuns to the abode of the men, and calling a presbyter asked him to go with her to the sufferer. On their coming thither, and seeing many present who endeavoured to hold him who was vexed and to restrain his frantic motions, but were by no means able, the presbyter pronounced exorcisms and did what he could to allay the fury of the unfortunate man. But, although he took much pains, he was unable to be of any service; and when no means of healing seemed to be left for the frantic person, the abbess on a sudden recollected that aforesaid dust, and

immediately ordered her maid to go and fetch the casket in which it was: and when, bringing what she was ordered, she entered the hall of the house, in the interior part of which the demoniac was tormented, on a sudden he became silent, and laid down his head as if sinking into sleep, and composed all his limbs for rest. All were silent and looked on with attention¹, anxiously expecting what issue the affair would have. And after about the space of an hour, he who had been afflicted sat up, and drawing a deep sigh said, 'Now I feel that I am whole, for I have recovered the sense of my mind.' Then they anxiously enquired how this had happened; and he said, 'As soon as this virgin with the casket which she carried approached the hall of this house, all the malignant spirits that oppressed me departed, and having left me were nowhere visible.' Then the abbess gave him a small portion of that dust, and so, a prayer having been offered by the presbyter, he passed a most quiet night, nor did he from that time suffer any nightly fear or trouble from the old enemy.

CHAPTER XII.

How, at his tomb, a little boy was cured of a fever.

IN time subsequent to this, there was in the same monastery a certain little boy grievously vexed by a long attack of fever: and when one day he was anxiously expecting the hour of its accession, one of the brothers coming to him said, 'Do you wish, my son, that I should tell you how you may be

¹ 'Conticuere omnes intentique ora tenebant.' Virg. *Æn.* ii. 1.

cured of the affliction of this complaint? Arise, go into the church, and approaching the sepulchre of Oswald, there sit down, and remain quiet close by the tomb. Take care that you do not go out thence or move from the place until the hour of the remission of the fever shall have passed. Then I myself will go in and lead you out thence.' He did as the brother had advised, and his complaint by no means presumed to attack him while he sat at the tomb of the saint; nay, in so great fear did it flee from him, that neither on the second day, nor on the third, nor ever after durst it attack him. The brother who came from thence and related this occurrence to me, added that at the time when he spoke with me, that boy being now a young man was still living in the monastery, on whom this miracle of healing was wrought when a child. Nor is it surprising that the prayers of that king now reigning with the Lord were of much avail with Him, since formerly whilst holding the government of a temporal kingdom he was always accustomed to labour and pray rather for an eternal kingdom.

In short, they relate that he very often continued in prayer from the time of matin lauds until day, and that by reason of his constant habit of praying or of giving thanks to the Lord, he was wont wherever he sat to keep his hands outstretched¹ upon his knees. Moreover, it was reported and passed into a common proverb, that he even ended his life with the words of a prayer. For when beset on every side with weapons and enemies, he saw that he must immediately be

¹ Supinas, 'with the palms turned up.' Virg. *Æn.* iii. 176; Hor. *Od.* iii. 21. 1: 'Qui fuit habitus precantium.' Facc. *Lex.* Perhaps, this was to express the desire of receiving.

killed, he prayed for the souls of his army; whence they say in a proverb, ‘“ Lord have mercy on their souls,” said Oswald, falling to the ground.’

His bones, then, were carried away and buried in the monastery of which I have spoken. Moreover, the king who had killed him commanded that his head and hands together with the arms should be cut off from his body and set upon stakes. But Oswy his successor in the kingdom coming thither with an army a year after, took them away, and buried the head indeed in the cemetery of the church of Lindisfarne, but the hands with the arms in the royal city¹.

CHAPTER XIII.

How in Ireland a certain person was by his relics recovered from the point of death.

NOR did the fame of this illustrious man pervade all the borders of Britain only, but reached even to the parts of Germany and Ireland also, shedding far across the ocean the rays of salutary light. In short, the most reverend prelate Acca is wont to relate that, when on a journey to Rome, he and his bishop Wilfrid stopped with the most holy Wilbrord, archbishop of the nation of the Fresones, he frequently heard him speak of the wonderful things which were done in that province at the relics of the same most revered king.

Also he related that when he was as yet a presbyter in Ireland, passing his life abroad for the sake of an eternal

¹ Bamborough.

country, the rumour of his sanctity had already spread far and wide in that island also. One miracle, among others, that he related, I have thought fit to insert in our present history.

‘In the time,’ said he, ‘of the mortality which ravaged with wide-spread destruction Britain and Ireland, a certain scholar of the nation of the Scots was, among others, smitten with the distemper of the same plague, a man indeed learned in the study of letters, but having no solicitude or zeal regarding the care of his eternal salvation; who, when he saw himself very near death, began to fear and be dismayed, lest presently when dead, he should, for the desert of his crimes, be snatched away to the prisons of hell; and called out on me, when I was stationed near him, and trembling amid weak sobs with a lamentable voice made his complaint to me thus. “You see,” said he, “how already, the distemper of my body increasing, I am brought to the point of undergoing death: nor do I doubt but that after the death of the body, I am to be snatched away immediately to the eternal death of the soul, and subjected to infernal torments, since for no short time, amid the studies of divine reading, I was wont to serve the entanglements of vices more than the Divine commands. It is, however, my resolution, if the goodness of Heaven shall grant me some space of life, to correct my vicious habits, and to reform my whole mind and life in obedience to the Divine will. But I know that it is not by any merit of mine that I can receive a grant of life, nor do I trust that I shall receive it, unless perchance He shall deign to be propitious to me, a wretch and unworthy of pardon, through the assistance of those who have served

Him faithfully. Moreover, we have heard, and the report is most prevalent, that there was in your nation a king of wonderful sanctity, by name Oswald, the excellence of whose faith and virtue, even after his death, became renowned by the working of frequent miracles: and I beseech you, if you have any of his relics by you, to bring them to me, if perchance the Lord would be pleased to have mercy on me through his merit;” and I answered: “I have indeed some of the wood on which his head was fixed by the pagans when he was killed; and if you believe with a firm heart, Divine goodness may, through the merit of so great a man, both grant you a longer space of this life, and also make you worthy of entrance into life eternal.” And he without delay answered, that he had entire faith in this.

‘Then I blessed some water, and putting into it a splinter of the aforesaid oak, gave it to the sick man to drink. He presently began to feel better, and, recovering from his illness, lived a long time after, and being wholly converted to the Lord in heart and deed, proclaimed to all, wherever he came, the clemency of the good Creator, and the glory of His faithful servant.’

CHAPTER XIV.

How, on the death of Paulinus, Ithamar received in his place the episcopate of the Church of Rochester; and concerning the wonderful humility of King Oswin, who was cruelly slain by Oswy.

OSWALD therefore having been translated to the celestial kingdom, his brother Oswy received in his stead the throne

of his earthly kingdom, a young man of about thirty years of age, and held it twenty-eight years with very great trouble; being attacked, to wit, by the pagan king Penda, and by the pagan nation of the Mercians that had killed his brother, and also by his own son Alchfrid, as well as by his nephew¹ Oidilwald, that is, the son of his brother who reigned before him.

In the second year of his reign, that is, in the year of the Lord's incarnation 644, the most reverend father Paulinus, formerly indeed bishop of York, but then of the city of Rochester, departed to the Lord, on the sixth day of the Ides of October², having held the episcopate nineteen years two months and twenty-one days³, and was buried in the chapel of the blessed apostle Andrew, which King Ædilberct built from the foundations, in the same city of Rochester. In whose place the Archbishop Honorius ordained Ithamar, by birth indeed of the Kentish nation, but in life and erudition equal to his predecessors.

Moreover, Oswy had, during the first part of his reign, a partner in the royal dignity by name Oswin, of the family of King Ædwin, that is, the son of Osric⁴, concerning whom I have spoken above, a man of eminent piety and devotion, who, in the greatest affluence of all things, and himself beloved by all, ruled the province of the Deiri. But he who ruled the other part of the Transhumbran nation to the north, that is, the province of the Bernicii, could not keep at peace with

¹ *fratruo*.

² October 10.

³ He was bishop of Rochester eleven years, and of York eight years.

⁴ Son of Alfric, who was the paternal uncle of Ædwin, and brother of Ælla. Florence, p. 645.

him; but, on the contrary, when causes of dissension increased, he cut him off by a most miserable death. For when they had each collected an army against the other, and Oswin saw that he could not contend in war with him who had more auxiliaries, he thought it more advantageous to give up at that time his intention of fighting, and keep himself for better times. He therefore dismissed the army which he had collected, and ordered each man to return home from the place which is called Vilfaræsdun, that is, the Hill of Vilfar, and is about twelve miles distant from the village of Cataracto, towards the north-west: and he himself turned aside with one only of his most faithful soldiers, called Tondheri, to conceal himself in the house of Earl Hunwald, whom also he considered to be most friendly to him. But alas, oh grief! it was far otherwise: for the same earl betrayed him; and Oswy, by the agency of his chief officer Ædilwin, slew him, together with the soldier aforesaid, in a manner to be detested by all men. This took place on the thirteenth day of the Kalends of September¹, in the ninth year of his reign, in the place which is called Ingetlingum², where, afterwards, in order to atone for this crime, a monastery was built, in which prayers should daily be offered to the Lord for the redemption of the soul of each king, to wit, both of the one who was killed, and of him who commanded him to be killed.

Moreover, King Oswin was comely to behold, and tall in stature, and pleasant to discourse with, and courteous in

¹ Aug. 20.

² Gilling, near Richmond, Yorkshire. The monastery was built by Eanfleda, Oswy's wife.

manners, and bountiful to all, that is, to both nobles and ordinary persons; whence it happened that, on account of his royal dignity of mind and countenance and merits, he was beloved by all, and even the most noble came from almost all provinces far and near to serve him. Among whose other glories of virtue and modesty, and, as I may say, of special benediction, his humility also is reported to have been very great, as it will suffice to prove by one example.

He had given a very excellent horse to Bishop Aidan, on which he might either cross the streams of rivers or perform a journey in case of any other pressing necessity, although he usually went on foot. A short time after, a poor man meeting the bishop, and asking alms, he dismounted, and ordered the horse, regally caparisoned as it was, to be given to the poor man, for he was very compassionate, and a cherisher of the poor, and, as it were, a father of the wretched. This being told the king, he said to the bishop, when they were about to go in to dinner, ‘How was it, lord bishop, that you gave a kingly horse, which it became you to have for yourself, to a poor man? Had we not very many horses of less value, and of other sorts, which would have sufficed for gifts to the poor, without your giving that horse to them which I chose for your special possession?’ To whom the bishop answered immediately, ‘What do you say, O king? Is that foal of a mare dearer to you than that son of God?’ After which words they went in to dine. And the bishop, indeed, sat down in his own place. Forthwith the king, for he had come from hunting, began to warm himself, standing at the hearth with his attendants; and suddenly, whilst he was warming himself, remembering the words which the bishop

had said to him, he ungirded his sword, and gave it to a servant, and, approaching with haste, threw himself before the bishop's feet, desiring that he would be reconciled with him, 'for never hereafter,' said he, 'will I say anything of this, or judge what or how much of our money you may give to the sons of God.' The bishop, seeing this, was much alarmed, and immediately arising, lifted him up, assuring him that he was quite reconciled to him, if he would only sit down to his meat, and lay aside his sorrow. And whilst the king, at the bishop's bidding and request, recovered his joyousness, the bishop, on the other hand, began to grow sad, even to the shedding of tears; whom when his presbyter asked, in his own country's language, which the king and his domestics did not understand, why he wept, 'I know,' said he, 'that the king will not live long, for I never before this saw a humble king. Whence I perceive that he is soon to be snatched out of this life, for this nation is not worthy to have such a ruler.' And not long after, the dire presage of the bishop was fulfilled by the sad death of the king, concerning which I have spoken above.

But Bishop Aidan himself, not more than twelve days after the slaughter of the king whom he loved, that is, on the day before the Kalends of September¹, was removed from this world, and received from the Lord the eternal reward of his labours.

¹ Aug. 31, A.D. 651. In Bede's *Life of Cuthbert*, ch. iv. it is said that a vision of Aidan's death induced Cuthbert to resolve to become a monk.

CHAPTER XV.

How Bishop Aidan predicted to some voyagers a storm about to happen, and gave them holy oil whereby they might allay it.

AND of what merit he was, the internal Arbiter¹ showed by signs of miracles, of which it will suffice to state three as a memorial of him. A certain presbyter, by name Utta², a man of great gravity and veracity, and on this account honoured by all men, even by the princes themselves of this world, when he was sent to Kent to bring thence a wife for King Oswy, to wit, Eanfleda³, the daughter of King Ædwin, who had been carried thither when her father was slain, intending indeed to go thither by a land journey, but to return with the virgin by ship, came to Bishop Aidan, entreating him to make supplication to the Lord for himself and his people, who were about to undertake so long a journey. Who blessing them and commending them to the Lord, gave them also some hallowed oil, saying, 'I know that when you shall have gone on board ship, a tempest and contrary wind will overtake you, but do you remember to cast into the sea this oil which I give you, and forthwith, the winds ceasing, a pleasant calm of the sea will attend you, and send you on your desired voyage home.' All which things were fulfilled in order as the prelate had foretold: and indeed, at first, when the waters of the deep were raging, the sailors tried by casting anchors into the sea to stay the ship, but they did not gain anything by doing this: and when, the waves sweeping in on every side

¹ internus arbiter. ² See Chap. xxi. ³ See Bk. II. Chaps. ix. xx.

and beginning to fill the ship, all saw death threatening them and already at hand, at length the presbyter, remembering the words of the prelate, having taken the flask, cast some of the oil into the sea, and forthwith, as had been foretold, it rested from its raging. And so it came to pass that the man of God both foretold by the spirit of prophecy the future tempest, and by the virtue of the same spirit, although bodily absent, allayed it when it had arisen. The order of which miracle, no ordinary relator of doubtful credit, but a most faithful presbyter of our Church, by name Cynimund, narrated to me, who said that he had heard this from the presbyter Utta himself, on whom and by whom it was wrought.

CHAPTER XVI.

How he also by praying turned away fire which had been applied to the royal city by enemies.

MANY who were able to know, relate another memorable miracle of the same father. For in the time of his episcopate, a hostile army of the Mercians, commanded by Penda, ravaging far and wide with impious slaughter the regions of the Northumbrians, came to the royal city which is named after Bebbā, a former queen: and because he could neither take it by force nor by siege, he attempted to consume it with flames; and having pulled down the villages which he found in the neighbourhood of the city, he brought thither a vast heap of beams, rafters, partitions, wattles, and thatch, and encompassed the city with these raised to a great height, on the side which is towards the land: and when he saw the

wind favourable, he endeavoured, by setting fire to it, to burn the city. At which time the most reverend prelate Aidan abode in the island of Farne¹, which is distant from the city about two miles. For he was wont often to retire thither for the sake of secret prayer and silence. In short, to this day they are accustomed to show in the same island the place of his solitary abode. Who, when he beheld globes of fire and smoke raised above the walls of the city by the winds bearing them, is reported to have lifted up his eyes and hands to heaven, and to have said with tears, ‘See, Lord, what evil Penda does.’ At which saying, immediately the winds, being turned from the city, hurled back the burning flames against those who had kindled them, so that some being hurt, and all terrified, they ceased from any longer attacking a city which they perceived to have been Divinely protected.

CHAPTER XVII.

How a wooden prop of the church, on which he was leaning when he died, could not be consumed by the flames, when the rest of the structure was burning; and concerning his private life.

WHEN the day of death compelled him to quit the body, having completed sixteen years of his episcopate, he was in the royal country-house, not far from the city of which I have before spoken. For having a church and a chamber there, he had been wont very often to turn in and stay there, and

¹ Or Fern Island, off Bamborough, at a distance of about two miles, and belonging to the parish of Holy Island, Durham.

thence to go out to preach in all the places round. Which same thing he was also wont to do at other country-houses of the king; since he had no possession of his own, except his church and some adjacent fields. They erected, therefore, a tent for him, when he was ill, at the west end of the church, so that the tent itself was supported by the wall of the church. Whence it happened that he breathed forth his last breath of life, leaning against the wooden prop¹ which was set against the outside of the church for support. Moreover, he died in the seventeenth year of his episcopate, on the day before the Kalends of September. His body was presently removed thence to the island of Lindisfarne, and buried in the cemetery of the brethren. But after some interval of time, when a larger church was built there, and dedicated in honour of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, his bones were removed thither, and laid at the right side of the altar with the respect due to so great a pontiff.

Finan succeeded him in the episcopate, himself also sent thither from Hii, an island and monastery of the Scots, and continued no short time in the episcopate. Moreover, it happened a few years after, that when Penda, king of the Mercians, coming with a hostile army into these parts, destroyed all that he could with fire and sword, that village also, in which the prelate died, was, together with the aforesaid church, consumed by flames. But, in a wonderful manner, that wooden prop² alone, against which he leaned

¹ apposta.

² destina, 'a wooden clamp.' 'Sin autem, propter fluctus aut impetus maris destinæ arcas non potuerint continere.' Vitruvius, *De Architectura*, lib. v. cap. xii. Or, 'a wooden prop.' 'Atlantem gestatorem, bajulum, tibicinem

when he died, could not be consumed by the fire that devoured all things around. Which miracle becoming known, the church was presently restored in the same place, and the same wooden prop set against it on the outside, as it had been before, for a support to the wall. And again, after some time had elapsed, it happened by the fault of negligence that the same village and the church itself likewise were consumed by fire. But not even then could the flame touch that wooden prop, and, in truth, most miraculously, although it entered the very holes in it, by which it was fastened to the edifice, and ate through them, it was not allowed to injure the prop itself. Wherefore, a church having been built there a third time, they placed that wooden prop, not, as before, on the outside to support the building, but within the church itself, in memory of the miracle, where the people, coming in, should bend the knee and implore the celestial mercy. And it is well known that since that time many have obtained in that same place the grace of healing : furthermore, that many having cut off splinters from this wooden prop, and put them in water, have found remedies for the ailments of themselves and their friends.

Moreover, I have written these things concerning the person and works of the aforesaid man, not that I by any means praise or approve of this in him, that he was defectively informed concerning the observance of Easter ; nay, I disapprove of this very much, as I have manifestly shown in the book which I wrote, ‘ Concerning Times,’ but, as a true historian, I describe simply such things as were done concerning

illum ac destinam cœli. Arnob. ii. p. 92. ‘*Et Thomas Lybicæ nutantis destina terræ.*’ Corrip. Laud. Justin. i. 18.

or by him, and praise those things that are worthy of praise in his actions, and commit them to remembrance for the benefit of the readers; to wit, his zeal for peace and charity, for continence and humility; his mind the victor of anger and avarice, the contemner both of pride and vain-glory; his diligence in both doing and teaching the Divine commands; his practice of reading and watching; his authority becoming a priest, in rebuking the proud and powerful; and likewise his tenderness in comforting the afflicted, in strengthening the weak, as well as in relieving and in defending the poor. Who, to say much in a few words, as far as I have learnt from those who knew him, was careful to omit nothing of all those things which from the evangelical, apostolical, or prophetic writings he had learnt ought to be done, but to fulfil them all in his works according to his ability. These things in the aforesaid prelate I much admire and love, since, forsooth, I doubt not but that they were pleasing to God. Moreover, as regards his not observing Easter at the proper time, whether being ignorant of the canonical time of it, or prevented by the authority of his nation from following what he knew, I neither approve of nor praise him. Of this, however, I approve in him, that in the celebration of his Easter he kept in heart, venerated, and preached nothing else than what we do, that is, the redemption of the human race through the passion, resurrection, and ascension into heaven of the Mediator between God and men, the man Jesus Christ. Wherefore he always kept it, not as some falsely suppose¹, on the fourteenth day of the moon, on any day of

¹ Among others, apparently Pope John IV, as he asserts in his letter to the Scots. Compare Chap. iv.

the week, with the Jews¹, but on the Lord's day from the fourteenth day of the moon unto the twentieth, on account of his belief, to wit, in the Lord's resurrection, which he believed took place on the first day of the week, and on account of the hope of our resurrection, which he, with holy Church, believed would take place on the same first day of the week, which is now truly called the Lord's day.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Concerning the life and death of the religious king Sigberct.

AT this time, after Eorpwald, the successor of Redwald, Sigberct his brother² ruled the kingdom of the East Angles, a good and religious man, who previously in Gaul, whilst he was living in exile to avoid the enmity of Redwald, received the washing of baptism, and, having returned to his country, when he obtained the kingdom, being desirous to imitate those things which he had seen well ordered in Gaul, founded a school³ in which boys might be instructed in letters; Bishop Felix, whom he had received from Kent, assisting him, and affording them pedagogues and masters, after the manner of the Kentish people⁴.

And so great a lover of the heavenly kingdom did that

¹ It is remarkable that Christ kept the Feast of the Passover on Thursday, the Jewish High Priest on Friday.

² Brother on the mother's side.

³ Most of the historians say that he founded schools 'per loca,' 'opportunis locis.' Gaul was always famous for its schools. This school has been claimed by some as the origin of the University of Cambridge.

⁴ It is probable that Augustine founded schools in Kent.

king become, that at last, having left the affairs of his kingdom and entrusted them to his kinsman Ecgrice, who also before this held a part of the same kingdom, he entered a monastery¹ which he had built for himself, and having received the tonsure, took more care to war for an eternal kingdom. Which when he had done for a long time, it happened that the nation of the Mercians, under King Penda, went to war against the East Angles, who when they found themselves inferior to the enemy in war, asked Sigberct to go with them to battle to encourage the soldiers. He being unwilling and refusing, they took him against his will out of the monastery, and brought him to the conflict, hoping that the minds of the soldiers would waver less, and be less able to think of flight, in the presence of one who was formerly a most strenuous and noted leader. But he, being not unmindful of his profession, whilst he was engirt with a most excellent army, would hold nothing in his hand but a rod, and was killed together with King Ecgrice; and the pagans pressing on, their whole army was either slain or dispersed.

Moreover, Anna, the son of Eni, of the royal blood², a most excellent man, and the father of a most excellent offspring³, concerning whom I shall hereafter speak in their time, became their successor in the kingdom, who himself

¹ Thomas of Ely in his *Life of St. Etheldrith*, 'Betrychesworde, quod nunc S. Edmundum appellat.' Now Bury St. Edmund's.

² Florence says that Eni was Redwald's brother. He gives A.D. 636 as the year of Anna's accession.

³ Sexburga abbess of Ely, Ethelburga abbess of Brie, Etheldritha abbess of Ely, Milburga nun of Ely, Sæthrytha abbess of Brie, and Witberga nun of Ely, were daughters of Anna. He had two sons, Aldwulf and Jurmin.

also was afterwards killed by the same pagan leader of the Mercians, by whom his predecessor was slain.

CHAPTER XIX.

How Furseus built a monastery among the East Angles, and concerning his visions and sanctity, to which also his flesh remaining uncorrupted after death, gave testimony.

BUT whilst Sigberct still held the government of the kingdom, there came a holy man from Ireland, by name Furseus¹, famous for his words and actions, and remarkable for peculiar virtues, being desirous to spend his life abroad for the Lord wheresoever he found an opportunity. When he had come to the province of the East Angles, he was received honourably by the aforesaid king, and following up his usual work of preaching the Gospel, converted many unbelievers to Christ both by the example of his virtue and the incentive of his discourse, and confirmed more fully in the faith and love of Christ those who already believed.

Where, having been seized by some infirmity of body, he had the privilege of enjoying an angelic vision, in which he was admonished sedulously to persist in the ministry of the Word which he had begun, and unweariedly to apply himself to his accustomed watchings and prayers, because his death was certain, but the hour of it uncertain, the Lord

¹ Jonas of Bobbio wrote a Life of Furseus, who came to England about A.D. 633, returned to France about A.D. 648, and died A.D. 650, at Mazières in Poitou. He founded two monasteries, one at Peronne, where he was buried (Gall. Christ. ix. 1035), and one at Latiniacum or Lezigny (Ib. vii. 490).

saying, 'Watch, therefore, because ye know not the day nor the hour¹.' Being confirmed by which vision, he took care to build with all speed a monastery upon a piece of ground which he had received from the aforesaid King Sigberct, and to establish it with regular discipline. Moreover, the monastery was among woods, and pleasant by reason of the nearness of the sea, being built in a certain fortified place, which in the tongue of the Angles is called Cnobheresburg, that is, Cnobhere's Town², which afterwards Anna, the king of that province, and certain of his nobles, enriched with more extensive buildings and endowments. Moreover, this man was of a most noble family of the Scots, but by far nobler in the mind than in the flesh. From the time of his boyhood he gave no small attention to sacred readings and monastic discipline, and, as chiefly becomes saints, he took care diligently to do all that he had learnt ought to be done.

What need of many words? In process of time he built for himself a monastery, in which he might more freely give his time to heavenly studies. There, being seized by illness, as the book written concerning his life fully informs us, he was snatched from the body, and from evening unto cock-crowing, being apart from the body, he had the privilege of beholding the countenances of the angelic hosts and hearing their blessed praises. Moreover, he was wont to relate that among other things he clearly heard them repeating, 'The saints shall proceed from virtue to virtue;' and again, 'The God

¹ Matt. xxiv. 42.

² Now Burghcastle, at the confluence of the rivers Yare and Waveney in Suffolk. Supposed to be the same as the Roman Garianonum on the Garienis. Camden, ii. 157.

of gods shall be seen in Sion.' And having been brought back to the body, he was on the third day again taken from it, and saw not only the greater joys of the blessed, but also very great conflicts of malignant spirits, who pressing upon him with many accusations, endeavoured to exclude him from the celestial way; nevertheless, they availed nothing, since the angels protected him. Concerning all which things, if any one wishes to know more fully, that is, with how great subtlety of craft the demons recounted his acts and idle words, and even his very thoughts, as if they had been written down in a book—what things whether joyful or sad he learnt from the holy angels, what things from the just men who appeared to him among the angels—let him read that book of his life concerning which I have spoken, and, as I feel sure, he will receive much spiritual benefit from it.

Amongst which things, however, there is one which I have thought it would be useful to many to insert in this History. When, then, he was carried on high, he was bidden by the angels who were conducting him to look back on the world. And he, turning his eyes downward, saw, as it were, a darksome valley situated in the lowest depth beneath him. He saw also four fires in the air, at no great distance from each other. And asking the angels what these fires were, he heard that these were the fires which should inflame and consume the world: one of falsehood, because we do not fulfil that which we promised in our baptism, to renounce Satan and all his works; another of cupidity, because we prefer the riches of the world to the love of heavenly things; a third of dissension, because we fear not to offend the minds of our neighbours even in unimportant things; a

fourth of impiety, because we make no account of spoiling the weaker and dealing fraudulently with them. The fires, however, increasing by degrees, extended themselves towards one another, and became united in an immense flame. And when they had approached him, he, in fear, said to the angel, 'Sir, behold, the fire approaches me.' But he said, 'That which you have not kindled will not burn you; for however terrible and vast that pyre appears, it yet tries each one according to the desert of his works; because every man's lust will burn in this fire. For just as any one burns in the body through unlawful pleasure, so when freed from the body, he will burn by deserved punishment.' Then he saw one of the three angels who were present as his guides in the whole of each vision, go before and divide the flame of the fire, whilst the other two, flying on either side, defended him from the danger of the fires. He saw also demons flying in the midst of the fire preparing conflagrations of wars against the just. Then follow the accusations of malignant spirits against him, and the defences of good spirits, a more abundant vision of the celestial hosts, and besides, of holy men of his own nation, who, he had learnt by the report of fame, had formerly not ignobly held the degree of the priesthood, from whom he heard not a few things that were very salutary to himself, and to all who might wish to hear them. And when they had ended their words, and had themselves also returned to heaven with the angelic spirits, there remained with the blessed Furseus the three angels of whom I have spoken, who were to bring him back to the body. And when they had approached the aforesaid very great fire, the angel indeed divided as before

the flame of fire But when the man of God came unto the passage opened between the flames, the unclean spirits, taking hold of one of those whom they tormented in the fire, threw him against him, and touching his shoulder and jaw burnt them. And he recognised the man, and called to mind that he had received his garment when he died. And the holy angel immediately seizing him cast him back into the fire. And the malignant enemy said, 'Repel not him whom you have before received, for as you have received the goods of that sinner, so you ought to be partaker of his punishments.' The angel retorted, 'He received it not through avarice, but for the saving of his soul,' and the fire ceased. The angel then turning to him said, 'That which you kindled burnt in you, for if you had not received the property of this man who was dead in his sins, his punishment would not have burnt in you.' And speaking further, he taught by wholesome discourse what was to be done for the salvation of those who repented at the point of death. And he, being afterwards restored to the body, bore the mark of the burning which he endured in his soul, during the whole of his life-time, visible to all on his shoulder and jaw, and in a wonderful manner his flesh showed openly to all what his soul had suffered in secret. Moreover, he always took care, as he had also done before, to show to all men the practice of virtues by examples, and to preach it by discourses. Moreover, he would set forth the order of his visions to those only who asked him by reason of their feeling of compunction. A certain aged brother of our monastery is still living who is wont to relate that a very truthful and religious man told him that he had seen Furseus himself in

the province of the East Angles, and heard those visions from his own mouth, adding, that it was the most severe time of winter and frosty weather when that man, sitting clad in a thin garment, related his story, and perspired, as though in the middle heat of summer, on account of the greatness of the horror or delight of which he spoke.

When then, to return to what I was saying before, after preaching in Scotland¹ the Word of God to all for many years, he could not well endure the tumults of crowds breaking in upon him, having left all that he seemed to possess, he departed from the island itself, his native country, and came with a few brethren through the Britons into the province of the Angles, and there preaching the Word, as I said, he built a noble monastery. These things having been duly accomplished, being desirous of alienating himself from all the business of this world, and even from that of the monastery itself, he left the care of the monastery and of souls to his brother Fullan², and to the presbyters Gobban and Dicull, and he being himself free from all things of the world, determined to end his life as an anchorite. He had another brother by name Ultan³, who, after a long monastic probation, had adopted the life of a hermit. Repairing, then, to him, he lived a whole year with him in continence and prayers, and in the daily labours of his hands.

Afterwards, seeing the province disturbed by an incursion

¹ i. e. Ireland. See the beginning of the chapter.

² Or Foillan. He founded a monastery at Fosse, in the diocese of Liege, on a site given him by St. Gertrude, abbess of Nivialla. Matthew of Westminster, ad a. 647.

³ Or Ulcan, Matthew of Westminster. He was abbot of the monastery of Peronne, and died May 1, A.D. 686. Gall. Christ. iii. 933, ix. 1036.

of the heathens, and foreseeing that danger threatened the monasteries also, having left all things in order, he sailed to Gaul, and there being received honourably by Hloduius¹, king of the Franks, or by the patrician Ercunwald², he built a monastery in a place called Latiniacum³, and not long afterwards being seized with illness, closed his last day⁴. Whose body the same Ercunwald the patrician receiving, kept it in a porch of the church which he was building at his country residence, the name of which was Perrona⁵, until the church itself should be dedicated. When this had taken place twenty-seven days after, the body, on being taken from the porch to be re-buried near the altar, was found as incorrupt as it was at the same hour that he departed out of this light. Furthermore, four years after, when a small ornamental chapel had been built to the east of the altar for the reception of the same body, it was found there still without any spot of corruption, and removed thither with due honour; where it is well known that, often, through the Divine operation, his merits have been declared by many miraculous virtues. These things concerning the incorruptness of his body I have briefly touched on, that it might be better known to my readers how great the sublimity of this man was. All which things whoever will read will find more fully set down in the book of his life, and also particulars concerning others his fellow-soldiers.

¹ Clovis (Hlodowig) II. succeeded his father Dagobert, A.D. 638, and died A.D. 656.

² Upon the death of Ega, Erchinwald, a relation of King Dagobert's, on his mother's side, succeeded as 'maire du palais,' A.D. 640.

³ Lagny, near Paris, on the river Marne. Gall. Christ. vii. 490.

⁴ Jan. 16, A.D. 650.

⁵ Peronne, on the Somme.

CHAPTER XX.

How, Honorius having deceased, Deusdedit discharged the office of the pontificate; and who were at that time prelates of the East Angles, and who of the church of Rochester.

IN the meantime, Felix, bishop of the East Angles, having deceased¹ seventeen years after he had received the episcopate, Honorius ordained in his place Thomas his deacon, of the province of the Gyrvi², and on his being withdrawn from this life after five years of his episcopate, he substituted in his place Berctgils, surnamed Boniface, of the province of Kent. And Honorius also himself, after he had fulfilled the limits of his course, departed from this light, in the year from the Lord's incarnation 653, on the day before³ the Kalends of October, and the episcopate having been vacant a year and six months, Deusdedit⁴, of the nation of the West Saxons, was elected sixth archbishop of the cathedral church of Canterbury. In order to ordain whom, Ithamar, the prelate of the church of Rochester, came thither. Moreover, he was ordained on the seventh day of the Kalends of April, and governed the church nine years,

¹ The continuator of Ingulf places his death in A.D. 646, which, deducting the seventeen years of his episcopate, would put his consecration and the commencement of Sigberct's reign in A.D. 629.

² The land of the Gyrvi or Fen-men (Camden) contained twelve hundred hides, and comprised the marsh districts of Ely and Huntingdonshire, besides parts of Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire. It extended from the borders of Suffolk to Bainsfleet in Lincolnshire.

³ 'Thy ærran dæge,' 'the first day of.' Saxon version.

⁴ Before consecration his name was Frithona.

seven months, and two days ; and he himself, on the decease of Ithamar, consecrated in his stead Damian, who was sprung of the race of the South Saxons.

CHAPTER XXI.

How the province of the Midland Angles was Christianized under King Peada.

AT this time, the Middilangli, that is, the Midland Angles, under Prince Peada, the son of King Penda, received the faith and the sacraments of the truth : who being a most excellent young man, and most worthy of the title and person of a king, was advanced by his father to the government of that nation, and came to Oswy the king of the Northumbrians to ask for his daughter Alchfleda to be given to him to wife ; but could not obtain his request otherwise than by receiving the faith of Christ and baptism together with the nation over which he ruled. But when he had heard the preaching of the truth, and the promise of the heavenly kingdom, and the hope of resurrection and future immortality, he freely confessed himself willing to become a Christian even though he should not receive the virgin, being chiefly persuaded to receive the faith by the son of King Oswy, by name Alchfrid, who was a kinsman and friend of his, having his sister for his wife, by name Cyniburga, the daughter of King Penda.

He was, therefore, baptized by Bishop Finan with all the earls and soldiers, and all their servants, who had come with

him, in the king's noted town which is called Ad Murum¹. And having received four presbyters who seemed fitted to teach and baptize his nation both by their erudition and manner of life, he returned home with much joy. Moreover, the presbyters were Cedd, and Adda, and Betti, and Diuma, of whom the last was by nation a Scot, and the rest Angles. Moreover, Adda was the brother of Uttan, an illustrious presbyter, and abbot of the monastery which is called Ad Capræ Caput², of which I have made mention above. The aforesaid priests coming therefore into the province with the prince, preached the Word and were heard gladly, and many daily, both of the nobles and of the lowest of the people, having renounced the filth of idolatry, were washed in the font of faith.

Nor did King Penda prohibit the preaching of the Word even among his own nation, that is, of the Mercians, if any were willing to hear it. On the contrary, he hated and despised those whom he found initiated in the faith of Christ, but destitute of works of faith, saying that they were contemptible wretches, who neglected to obey their God in whom they believed. These things were begun two years before the death of King Penda. Moreover, when he was killed, and Oswy a Christian king received his kingdom, as I shall relate in what follows, Diuma, one of the aforesaid four priests, was made bishop of the Midland Angles, and also of the Mercians, being ordained by Bishop Finan, for the scarcity of priests caused one prelate to be set over two

¹ Walton, near Newcastle (Camden); or Walbottle (Smith).

² Now Gateshead, close to Newcastle; from the Saxon 'gat,' or, 'gæt,' a goat.

peoples. And when he had, in a short time, gained no small number of people to the Lord, he deceased among the Midland Angles, in the region which is called Infeppingum¹, Ceollach undertook the episcopate in his stead, being himself also of the nation of the Scots; who, not long after, having left the bishopric, returned to the island of Hii, where was the head and chief place of many monasteries among the Scots. Trumheri, a religious man, and instituted in the monastic habit of life, succeeded him in the bishopric, by nation indeed an Angle, but ordained bishop by the Scots; which took place in the time of King Wulfhere, concerning whom I shall speak in what follows.

CHAPTER XXII.

How the East Saxons, at the preaching of Cedd, in the reign of King Sigberct, received again the faith which they had before cast off.

AT that time², also, the East Saxons, at the instance of King Oswy, received again the faith which they had formerly cast off³ when Bishop Mellitus was expelled. For Sigberct⁴ was king of the same nation, who reigned after Sigberct surnamed the Little, a friend of the same King Oswy, who, when he came frequently to him into the province of the

¹ Perhaps Repton, formerly called Repington, in Derbyshire.

² A.D. 653. Flor.

³ See Bk. II. Chap. v.

⁴ Erchenwin, or, as Florence calls him, Æscwin, was the first king of the East Angles. Then followed Sledda, Sebert, Sexred, Sigebert the Little (son of Sexred's brother Seward), Segebert the Good (son of Segebald or Sexbald, a son of Sledda), Suidhelm (his brother).

Northumbrians, was wont to try to make him understand that those could not be gods that were made by the hands of men; that wood or stone could not be the material for creating a god, of which the remainder is either consumed by fire, or formed into certain vessels for human use, or indeed esteemed as naught, and cast out of doors, to be trodden under foot and turned to earth. That God is rather to be understood as being incomprehensible in majesty, invisible to human eyes, omnipotent, eternal, who created heaven and earth, and the human race, who rules, and will judge the world in righteousness; whose eternal seat must be believed to be not in vile or perishable metal, but in heaven; and that it is of right to be understood that all who have learnt and do the will of Him by whom they were created, will receive eternal rewards from Him. When King Oswy had, in amicable and, as it were, brotherly counsel, often inculcated these and many things of this kind on King Sigberct, at length, the consent of his friends aiding, he believed, and having consulted with those about him, and also having exhorted them, when all were favourable and assented to the faith, he was baptized together with them by Bishop Finan, at the royal country residence of which I have above made mention, which is called 'Ad Murum;' for it is near the wall with which the Romans formerly girt the island of Britain, being twelve miles distant from the eastern sea.

Therefore, King Sigberct, having been now made a citizen of the eternal kingdom, returned to the seat of his temporal kingdom, asking of King Oswy that he would give him some teachers, who might convert his nation to the faith of Christ, and wash them in the font of salvation. Then he,

sending to the province of the Midland Angles, summoned to him the man of God, Cedd, and having given him another priest for a companion, sent him to preach the Word to the nation of the East Saxons, where when, having gone through all parts, they had gathered together a numerous church for the Lord, it happened on a certain time that the same Cedd returned home, and came to the church of Lindisfarne, in order to confer with Bishop Finan; who when he found that the work of the Gospel had prospered with him, made him bishop of the nation of the East Saxons, having called to him two other bishops to the ministering of the rite of ordination. And he, having received the degree of the episcopate, returned to the province, and fulfilling with greater authority the work which he had begun, built churches in various places, and ordained priests and deacons to assist him in the word of faith and the ministering of baptism, chiefly in the city which is called, in the tongue of the Saxons, Ythancæstir¹; moreover, in that also which is called Tilaburg²; of which the former place is on the bank of the river Penta³, the latter on the bank of the Thames: in which having collected a number of servants of Christ, he taught them to keep the discipline of regular life, as far as, being yet rude, they were able to receive it.

And when for no short time in the aforesaid province, to the joy of the king and to the joy alike of all the people, the institution of heavenly life received a daily increase, it

¹ Called by the Romans Othona. It was near Dengie, in Essex.

² Tilbury, on the Thames, in Essex.

³ Now the Freshwell, one of the two springs of which is still called Pant's Well.' Camden.

happened that the king himself, at the instigation of the enemy of all good men, was murdered by the hands of his own relations. Moreover, they were two brothers who perpetrated this crime, and who, when they were asked why they did it, had nothing else to answer, but that they were incensed and at enmity with the king, because he was wont to be too sparing of his enemies, and presently to pass over with placid mind, on their entreaty, the injuries done by them. This was the fault of the king, for which he was killed, that he kept with devoted heart the Gospel precepts: in which innocent death, however, his real fault was punished, according to the declaration of the man of God. For one of those earls that murdered him had contracted unlawful wedlock, and the bishop, when he was unable to prohibit or correct this, excommunicated him, and commanded all that would hear him not to enter his house, nor receive of his meat. The king, however, slighted the charge, and having been invited by the earl, went to his house to a feast, and when he was departing thence the prelate met him. The king, beholding him, immediately dismounted from his horse, trembling, and fell down at his feet, asking pardon for his offence. For the bishop also had likewise dismounted, having been himself on horseback. Moreover, in anger, he touched the prostrate king with the stick which he held in his hand, and making his protest with pontifical authority, said, 'I tell you, that because you would not keep yourself from the house of that lost and condemned person, you shall die in that very house.' But it is to be believed that such a death of a religious man not only atoned for such a fault, but even increased his merit, because, forsooth, it happened

on account of his piety and observance of the commands of Christ.

Moreover, Suidhelm, the son of Sexbald, succeeded Sigberct in the kingdom, who was baptized by Cedd himself, in the province of the East Angles¹, in the town belonging to the king, which is called Rendlæsham², that is, 'Rendil's dwelling;' and Ædilwald, king of the same nation of the East Angles, brother of Anna, king of the same people, received him on his coming up from the holy font.

CHAPTER XXIII.

How the same Bishop Cedd, receiving from King Oidilwald a place for building a monastery, consecrated it to the Lord with prayers and fastings; also concerning his death.

MOREOVER, the same man of God was also accustomed, when he discharged the office of the episcopate among the East Saxons, often to revisit his own province, that is, that of the Northumbrians, for the purpose of exhortation; whom when Oidilward³, the son of King Oswald, who held rule in the parts of the Deiri, saw to be a holy man, and wise, and approved in morals, he requested him to accept some possession of land of him to build a monastery, to which the

¹ Boniface was bishop of the province of the East-Angles (see Chap. xx.), and Cedd (Chap. xxii.) had been consecrated bishop for the same people. Probably Boniface represented the church in connection with Rome, and Cedd the independent church.

² Rendlesham, a village on the river Deben, in Suffolk.

³ M. Westminster does not mention Oidilwald in his list of Northumbrian kings. Bede's words may imply that he was king of only a portion of Deira.

king himself also might frequently come to pray to the Lord, and to hear the Word, and in which he might be buried when he died. For he also faithfully believed that he should be much benefitted by the daily prayers of those who were to serve the Lord in that place. Moreover, this king had with him a brother of the same bishop, by name Cælin, a man equally devoted to God, who, being a presbyter, was wont to minister both to him and to his family the Word and the sacraments of the faith; by knowing whom he chiefly came to love and know the bishop. The prelate, therefore, assenting to the king's wishes, chose for himself a place to build a monastery among lofty and remote mountains, in which there appeared to have been more lurking-places of robbers and dens of wild beasts than habitations of men; so that, according to the prophecy of Isaiah¹, 'the greenness of the rush and flag sprung up in dens which dragons formerly inhabited.' That is, the fruits of good works were there produced, where before either beasts were wont to haunt, or men to live after the manner of beasts.

Moreover, the man of God, studying first by prayers and fastings to purge the place he had received for a monastery from its former filth of crimes, and so to lay in it the foundations of the monastery, requested of the king that he would give him during the whole ensuing time of Lent leave and licence to abide there for the sake of prayer; on all which days, with the exception of Sunday, protracting² his fast to evening according to custom, he did not even then take anything except a very little bread and one hen's egg, with a little milk and water. For he said that this was the custom of

¹ Isaiah xxxv. 7.

² protelaus.

those of whom he had learnt the rule of regular discipline, first to consecrate to the Lord by prayers and fastings the places newly received for building a monastery or a church. And when ten days of the quadragesimal fast were yet remaining, there came one to summon him to the king. But he, in order that the religious work might not be intermitted on account of the king's affairs, desired his presbyter Cynibill, who was also his brother, to complete the pious undertaking. The latter willingly assented; and the duty of fasting and prayer having been fulfilled, he built there a monastery which is now called Læstingæu¹, and instituted religious rules there, according to the customs of the monks of Lindisfarne where he had been educated.

And when for many years he had administered the episcopate in the aforesaid province, and also had taken charge of this monastery, over which he set superiors², it happened that coming to this same monastery at a time of mortality³, he was attacked by bodily infirmity and died⁴. At first, indeed, he was buried outside, but in process of time a church was built of stone in the same monastery, in honour of the blessed mother of God, and in that church his body was laid on the right side of the altar.

¹ Lastingham, in the North Riding of Yorkshire, seven miles from Pickering. John of Tynemouth states that it was founded A.D. 648. Ceadda, after a three years' episcopate at York, is said to have returned to Lastingham, and died there A.D. 674. (Moberly.)

² *statutis præpositis*. 'And there placed a provost and aldermen,' Saxon Version.

³ All the chroniclers of the time mention this severe plague.'

⁴ Cedd was present at the synod of Streanæshalch (Whitby) A.D. 664, whence he returned to his province, and there instituted the observance of the Catholic Easter, and finally returned to Lastingham, where he died.

Moreover, the bishop gave the monastery to be ruled after him by his brother Ceadda, who afterwards was made bishop, as I shall relate in what follows. For those four of whom I have spoken, being brothers german, Cedd and Cynibill and Cælin and Ceadda, which is a thing rarely met with, were all eminent priests of the Lord, and two of them obtained the highest sacerdotal rank. When, therefore, the brethren who were in his monastery in the province of the East Saxons heard that he was dead, and buried in the province of the Northumbrians, about thirty men of their monastery came thither, being desirous either to live near the body of their father, if it should so please God, or dying, to be there buried; and they being kindly received by their brothers and fellow-soldiers, all died in that same place by the stroke of the aforesaid pestilence coming upon them, except one little boy, who, it is evident, was preserved from death by the prayers of his father. For when he had lived a long time after these events, and applied himself to the reading of the Scriptures, at length he discovered that he had not been regenerated by the water of baptism, and presently, having been washed in the font of the laver of salvation, he was also, after a while, advanced to the order of the presbytery, and was of service to many in the Church. Concerning whom I believe it is not to be doubted that, as I said, by the intercessions of his father, to whose body he had come on account of his love of him, he was delivered at the point of death, that so he himself might escape eternal death, and by teaching show forth the ministry of life and salvation to others also of the brethren.

CHAPTER XXIV.

How the province of the Mercians, King Penda having been slain, received the faith of Christ; and Oswy, for the victory he had gained, gave possessions and territories for the building of monasteries.

AT this time, King Oswy, when he was suffering from the severe and intolerable invasions of the oft-mentioned king of the Mercians, who had killed his brother, being at last compelled by necessity, promised that he would give him innumerable royal ornaments and gifts, greater than can be believed, as the price of peace, if only he would return home and cease to lay waste, even to utter destruction, the provinces of his kingdom. And when the perfidious king did not assent to his prayers, having determined to destroy and exterminate all his nation from little to great, he looked to the help of Divine goodness for deliverance from such barbarous inhumanity, and binding himself by a vow said, 'If the pagan will not receive of our gifts, let us offer them to Him who will—to the Lord our God.' He vowed, therefore, that if he should come off victor, he would offer his daughter to be dedicated to the Lord in holy virginity, and that he would likewise give twelve possessions of estates to build monasteries; and so, with a very small army committed himself to the conflict. In short, it is reported that the pagans had an army thirty times larger, for they had thirty legions drawn up under the command of most noted leaders, with whom King Oswy and his son Alchfrid joined battle, having, as I said, a very small army, but trusting in Christ their leader. Ecgfrid,

another son of his, was at that time kept a hostage in the province of the Mercians, at the court of Queen Cynwise¹. Moreover, King Oswald's son Oidilwald, who ought to have helped them, was on the side of their adversaries, and was leader of the same who were about to fight against his country and his uncle, although at the very time of fighting he had withdrawn himself from the battle, and was awaiting the event of the engagement in a place of safety. The conflict, then, having been begun, the pagans were put to flight and slain; the thirty royal leaders² who had come to assist him were almost all killed, among whom Ædilhere, the brother of Anna king of the East Angles, who reigned after him, himself the cause of the war, having lost his soldiers and auxiliaries, was slain. And because the battle was fought near the river Winwæd³, which then by reason of an inundation of rains had widely overflowed its channel and even all its banks, it happened that the water destroyed many more in the flight than the sword in battle.

¹ She bore to Penda five sons, Peada, Wolfhere, Ædildred, Merowald, and Mercelm.

² Nennius, 64, 65, says, 'Osguid filius Ealdfrid—occidit Pantha in campo Gai, et nunc facta est strages Gai campi, et reges Britonum interfecti sunt qui exierant cum rege Pantha in expeditione usque ad urbem quæ vocatur Judeu. . . . Solus autem Catgabail rex Guenedotæ regionis, cum exercitu suo evasit de nocte consurgens, quapropter est vocatus Catgabail Catguommedd.' He explains the last word as 'qui pugnam renuit.'

³ As the war was concluded 'in regione Loidis,' the Winwæd is, probably, the Broad Are, which flows by Leeds. The battle gave rise to a proverbial saying,—

' Unde dicitur,
In Vinvæd amne vindicata est cædes Annæ
Cædes regum Sigbert et Ecgrice
Cædes regum Oswald et Edwine.'

Then King Oswy, according to the vow he had made to the Lord, returning thanks to God for the victory vouchsafed to him, gave his daughter *Ælfleda*¹, who had scarcely completed the age of one year, to be consecrated to Him by perpetual virginity; twelve estates of land being given besides, in which, the pursuit of worldly warfare being removed, place and means might suffice for the constant devotion of monks, to practise celestial warfare, and make supplication for the eternal peace of his nation. Of which estates, to wit, he gave six in the province of the Deiri, and six in that of the Bernicii. Each estate, moreover, was of ten families, that is, all together were of one hundred and twenty. Furthermore, the aforesaid daughter of King Oswy to be dedicated to God, entered the monastery which is called *Heruteu*², that is, the Island of the Stag, over which the abbess *Hild*³ then presided, who two years after having acquired an estate of ten families, in a place which is called *Streanæshalch*⁴, built there a monastery, in which the aforesaid daughter of the king was at first a scholar, and afterwards also a preceptress in living by monastic rule, until, having completed the number of fifty-nine years, the blessed virgin entered into the embrace and nuptials of her heavenly spouse. In which monastery, herself and her father Oswy⁵, and her mother *Æanfled*,

¹ In the *Vitæ Sanctorum* it is stated that she was born A.D. 654, and died A.D. 713.

² Now Hartlepool, in the county of Durham.

³ See Chap. xxv. and Bk. IV. Chap. xxiii. *Hilda* was of the royal family of Northumbria. She was born, A.D. 614; became a nun, A.D. 647; became abbess of Hartlepool, A.D. 649; and died abbess of Whitby, A.D. 680.

⁴ i.e. *Phari sinus*, 'the bay of the watch-tower.' See Chap. xxv.

⁵ Oswy died Feb. 15, A.D. 670, in his fifty-eighth year.

and Ædwin her mother's father, and many other noble persons were buried in the church of the blessed apostle Peter. Moreover, King Oswy finished this war in the region of Loidis, in the thirteenth year of his reign, and on the seventeenth day of the Kalends of December¹, to the great advantage of both peoples, for he both freed his own nation from the hostile devastations of the pagans, and converted the nation itself of the Mercians and of the neighbouring provinces to the grace of the Christian faith, after having cut off its perfidious chief.

Moreover, Diuma² was made the first bishop in the province of the Mercians, both of the Lindisfari and the Midland Angles, as I before said, and he died and was buried among the Midland Angles. The second was Cellach³ who having left his episcopal office during his life, returned to Scotland. Each was of the race of the Scots. The third was Trumhere, of the nation, indeed, of the Angles, but taught and ordained by the Scots, who also was abbot in the monastery that is called Ingetlingum. The same is the place in which King Oswin was killed, as I have before related. For Queen Æanfled, his kinswoman⁴, to make amends for his undeserved death, requested of King Oswy that he would give the aforesaid servant of God, Trumhere, a site there for building a monastery, because he also was

¹ According to Bede, this battle was fought A.D. 654; for the thirteenth year of Oswy's reign began Aug. 5, A.D. 654.

² See Chap. xxi. This took place A.D. 656. (Smith.)

³ Called Ceollach, Chap. xxi.

⁴ She was great-granddaughter of Yffi, whose second son Ælfric was Oswin's grandfather. Peada had married Oswy's daughter Alchfleda. Also Alchfrid, Oswy's son, had married Cyniburga, Peada's sister. See Chap. xxi.

a relation of the slain king. In which monastery, to wit, continual prayers should be made for the eternal weal of both kings, that is, of the king who was slain, and of him who ordered him to be slain. Moreover, the same king Oswy, three years after the death of King Penda, became ruler of the nation of the Mercians, and also of other peoples of the southern provinces, and he also subjected the greater part of the nation of the Picts to the sway of the Angles.

At which time, he gave to the aforesaid Peada, son of King Penda, because he was his kinsman, the kingdom of the Southern Mercians, which consists, as they say, of five thousand families, divided by the river Treanta from the Northern Mercians, whose land is of seven thousand families. But the same Peada in the next spring was very wickedly killed, as they relate, by the treachery of his own wife, at the very time of the paschal feast. Moreover, full three years¹ after the death of King Peada, the leaders of the nation of the Mercians, Immin and Eafha and Eadberct, rebelled against King Oswy, having set up Wulfhere as their king, a young man the son of the same Penda, whom they had kept concealed; and having expelled the chief men of the usurping king, bravely regained their territory and their liberty as well: and so being free, together with their king, they rejoiced to serve Christ the true king, for an eternal kingdom in the heavens. Moreover, the same king ruled over the nation of the Mercians seventeen years, and had Trumhere for the first bishop, concerning whom I have spoken above; the second Jaruman, the third Ceadda, the

¹ A.D. 657. *Saxon Chronicle.*

fourth Wynfrid. All these succeeding one another in order, held the episcopate of the nation of the Mercians under King Wulfhere.

CHAPTER XXV.

How a question concerning the time of Easter was raised against those who had come from Scotland.

IN the meantime, Bishop Aidan having been removed from this life, Finan, who was ordained and sent by the Scots, had received, in his place, the degree of the episcopate, and built a church suitable to the episcopal see in the isle of Lindisfarne; which, however, after the manner of the Scots, he constructed not of stone, but entirely of hewn oak, and covered it with reeds; and this church the most reverend archbishop Theodore afterwards dedicated in honour of the blessed apostle Peter. But Eadberct, bishop of that place, having removed the reeds, took care to overlay the whole of it with sheets of lead, that is, both the roof and also the walls.

At this time a frequent and great question was raised concerning the keeping of the paschal feast; those who had come from Kent, as well as those who had come from Gaul, affirming that the Scots kept Easter Sunday contrary to the custom of the universal Church. Among these was a very keen defender of the true paschal feast, named Ronan, by nation indeed a Scot, but having been fully taught the rules of ecclesiastical truth in the parts of Gaul or Italy; and he, contending with Finan, corrected indeed many, or stimulated

them to a more strict enquiry after the truth. By no means, however, was he able to amend Finan, but rather, because he was a man of a fierce temper, he made him more bitter by reproof, and an open adversary of the truth. Moreover, James the deacon, as I said above, of the venerable archbishop Paulinus, observed the true and catholic paschal feast together with all whom he had been able to instruct in the more correct way. Queen Eanfled also, together with her court, observed it according as she had seen done in Kent, having with her from Kent a presbyter of the catholic observance, by name Romanus: whence it is related to have sometimes happened in those times that the paschal feast was kept twice in one year; and when the king, having ended his fast, was keeping the Lord's paschal feast, the queen with her court still continuing in her fast, was keeping the Day of Palms. Moreover, this discordance of observance of the paschal feast, whilst Aidan lived, was patiently tolerated by all, since they understood that although he could not keep the paschal feast contrary to the custom of those who had sent him, he yet took care diligently to fulfil the works of faith, piety, and love, according to the usual manner of all holy men, wherefore he was deservedly beloved by all, even by those who thought differently concerning the paschal feast. Nor was he held in veneration by persons of inferior station alone, but also by the bishops themselves, Honorius of the Cantuarii and Felix of the East Angles.

However, on the death of Finan, who came after him, when Colman succeeded to the episcopate, being himself also sent by the Scots, a greater controversy arose concerning the keeping of Easter, and also concerning other

rules of ecclesiastical life ; whereupon this question moved the feelings and hearts of many, who feared lest perchance after they had received the name of Christians, they were running or had run in vain¹. It came even to the ears of the rulers—to wit, King Oswy, and his son Alchfrid ; which Oswy, forsooth, having been instructed and baptized by the Scots, and also being well skilled in their language, thought that nothing was better than what they had taught him. Further, Alchfrid, having for his instructor in Christian erudition Wilfrid, a most learned man (for he had gone to Rome previously for the sake of ecclesiastical learning, and had spent much time with Dalfinus, archbishop of Lyons in Gaul, from whom also he had received the crown of the ecclesiastical tonsure), knew that his doctrine was justly to be preferred to all the traditions of the Scots. Wherefore he had also given him a monastery of forty families, in a place which is called Inhrypum², which place, to wit, he had granted a short time previously to those who followed the Scots' opinions, for the possession of a monastery. ~~But~~ because afterwards, when the option was given them, they were willing rather to quit the place than to change their custom, he gave it to him whose doctrine and life were worthy of the place. Agilberct, bishop of the West Saxons, of whom I have above made mention, the friend of King Alchfrid and of the abbot Wilfrid, had at that time come to the province of the Northumbrians, and was staying among them for some time, who also, at the request of Alchfrid, made Wilfrid a presbyter in his

¹ Gal. ii. 2.

² Ripon. See Bk. V. Chaps. i. xix.

aforesaid monastery. Moreover, he also had with him a presbyter of the name of Agatho. Therefore, a question being raised there concerning the paschal feast, and the tonsure, and other ecclesiastical matters, it was arranged that in the monastery called Streanæshalch, which is interpreted 'Sinus Fari,' over which the abbess Hild, a woman devoted to God, then presided, a synod should be held, and this dispute terminated. Thither came both kings, the father, to wit, and the son; the bishops, Colman with his clergy from Scotland, Agilberct with the presbyters Agatho and Wilfrid. James and Romanus were on the side of these; the abbess Hild, with her party, on the side of the Scots, on which side also was the venerable Bishop Cedd, long before ordained by the Scots, as I have said above, who proved in that council a most vigilant interpreter of both parties.

And first King Oswy having said by way of preface, that it behoved those who together served one God to hold one rule of living, and those who all expected one kingdom in the heavens, not to differ in the celebration of the heavenly sacraments; but that they should enquire rather what was the truest tradition, and that this should be followed by all in common; commanded his bishop, Colman, first to declare what that custom was which he followed, and whence it derived its origin. Then said Colman, 'This paschal feast which I am accustomed to keep, I received from my elders, who sent me hither as bishop, which all our fathers, men beloved by God, are known to have celebrated in the same manner. And this may not appear to any to be contemned or rejected, since it is the very feast which

the blessed evangelist St. John ¹, the disciple specially beloved by the Lord, together with all the Churches over which he presided, is recorded to have celebrated.' And when he had said these and such like things, the king commanded Agilberct also to proclaim openly the custom of his observance, whence it had its beginning, or by what authority he followed it. Agilberct replied, 'Let my disciple Wilfrid the presbyter speak, I entreat you, in my place, because we both think the same thing, together with the rest of the observers of ecclesiastical tradition, who are sitting here by us; and he can explain in the tongue of the Angles what we think, better and more clearly than I can by an interpreter.' Then Wilfrid, the king commanding that he should speak, began thus: 'The paschal feast which we observe,' said he, 'we have seen celebrated by all at Rome, where the blessed apostles Peter and Paul lived, taught, suffered, and were buried; this feast in Italy, and in Gaul, which countries we passed through for the sake of learning or of praying, we saw kept by all. We found Africa, Asia,

¹ Palmer, *Origines Liturgicæ*, Sect. ix., says that the Gallican Liturgy and rites were derived from St. John the Evangelist, Polycarp being John's disciple, and Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, being Polycarp's disciple. Adhelm, abbot of Meldæ (Meaux), and afterwards bishop of Sherborne, about the end of the seventh century, says that the British and Irish derived their paschal cycle from that of Severus Sulpitius, a monk of Gaul; and it is this tradition which the Irish and British ascribed to St. John. The reason then for Colman's reference to St. John was, that the ancient Gallican customs were esteemed to be derived from that apostle. 'Porro isti (Britanni) secundum decennem novennemque Anatolio computatum, aut potius juxta Sulpicii Severi regulam, qui lxxxiv. annorum cursum descripsit, xiv. lunæ cum Judæis paschale sacramentum celebrant.' Adhelmi Epistola ad Geruntium. This may only mean that the fourteenth day of the moon was *one* of the days on which the paschal feast was kept by the Britons.

Egypt, Greece, and all the world, wherever the Church of Christ is spread abroad, through divers nations and tongues, keeping this feast in one, and not a different, order of time, except these only, and their accomplices in obstinacy, I mean the Picts and the Britons, together with whom, from two most remote islands of ocean, nor yet from the whole of these, they contend with foolish labour against the whole world.' To whom, saying these things, Colman replied: 'It is marvellous that you will call our labour foolish, in which we follow the example of so great an apostle, who was worthy to lie upon the Lord's bosom, when all the world knows that he lived most wisely.' Then Wilfrid said, 'Far be it from us to accuse John of folly when he kept the decrees of the Mosaic Law according to the letter, whilst the Church, as yet Judaized in many things, and the apostles, were not able at once to discard the whole observance of the Law which was instituted by God, in the way in which it is necessary for all who come to the faith to renounce the idols which were invented by devils—to wit, lest they should create scandal to those Jews who were among the Gentiles. For hence it is that Paul circumcised Timothy; that he sacrificed victims in the temple; that he shaved his head at Corinth with Aquila and Priscilla, to wit, a thing of no advantage, except to avoid scandalizing the Jews. Hence it is that James says to the same Paul: "You see, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews who have believed, and they are all zealous of the Law¹." And yet it is not necessary in the present day, when the Gospel shines throughout the world, yea, it is not

¹ Acts xxi. 20.

lawful, for the faithful either to be circumcised, or to offer sacrifices of fleshly victims to God. Therefore John, according to the custom of the Law, began the celebration of the paschal feast on the fourteenth day of the first month at evening, not regarding whether this day fell on the Sabbath¹, or on any other day of the week. But when indeed Peter preached at Rome, being mindful that the Lord arose from the dead, and conferred the hope of resurrection on the world on the first day of the week, he understood that the paschal feast was so to be kept, that according to the custom and precepts of the Law, he should always wait for the rising of the fourteenth moon of the first month at evening, just as John did; and when it had arisen, if the Lord's Day, which then was called "the first day of the week," was about to come next morning, he began on that very evening to celebrate the Lord's Passover, as we also are wont to do at this day. But if, however, the Lord's Day was not about to come the next morning after the fourteenth moon, but on the sixteenth or seventeenth², or on any other day of the moon up to the twenty-first, he waited for it, and on the preceding Sabbath, in the evening, he began the sacred rites of the paschal feast; and so it came to pass that the Lord's day of the Passover was kept only from the fifteenth day of the moon unto the twenty-first. Nor does this evangelical and apostolical tradition break the Law, but rather fulfils it, it being ordered therein that the paschal feast should be kept from the fourteenth day of the moon of the

¹ i. e. Saturday.

² It is evident from this passage that the day *previous* to the appearance of the fourteenth moon was called the fourteenth day of the moon.

first month at evening, unto the twenty-first day of the moon of the same month at evening; to the imitation of which observance all the successors of the blessed John in Asia since his death, and all the Church throughout the world, is conformed. And that this is the true paschal feast, and this alone is to be kept by the faithful, was not newly appointed at the Council of Nice, but confirmed, as ecclesiastical history informs us. Whence it appears that you, Colman, neither follow the example of John, as you suppose, nor that of Peter, whose tradition you knowingly contradict, and that you do not agree either with the Law or the Gospel in the keeping of your paschal feast. For John, keeping the time of the paschal feast according to the decrees of the Mosaic Law, had no regard to the first day of the week; which is not your practice, since you keep the paschal feast only on the first day of the week. Peter was accustomed to keep the Lord's day of the paschal feast from the fifteenth day of the moon unto the twenty-first, which you do not, since you keep the Lord's day of the Passover from the fourteenth unto the twentieth day of the moon; so that you often begin the paschal feast on the thirteenth day of the moon at evening¹; of which neither the Law makes any mention, nor did the Lord, the author and giver of the Gospel, on that day, but on the fourteenth, either eat the old passover at evening, or deliver

¹ This took place when the fourteenth day of the moon was on a Sunday, in which case it was kept as Easter Day, and the fast was discontinued on the preceding evening. See Theophilus, cited by Beda de Temp. Rat. 57. Those who kept the fourteenth as Easter Day claimed to keep the paschal feast with Christ, and upbraided those who kept it on the fifteenth, as keeping it with Caiaphas. See note to p. 219.

the sacraments of the New Testament to be celebrated by the Church in commemoration of His passion. Besides, you entirely exclude from the celebration of your paschal feast the twenty-first day of the moon, which the Law recommended to be chiefly observed; and so, as I said, you do not agree either with John or Peter, either with the Law or the Gospel.'

In reply to this, Colman said: 'Did Anatolius, a holy man, and much praised in the aforesaid ecclesiastical history, think that which was contrary to the Law or the Gospel, when he wrote that the Passover was to be kept from the fourteenth to the twentieth day of the moon? Is it to be believed that our reverend father Columba, and his successors, men beloved by God, who kept the paschal feast in the same manner, thought or did that which was contrary to the Divine pages? Whereas there were many among them whose sanctity was testified by celestial signs and the miracles of virtues which they wrought; and I myself, not doubting their being saints, desist not from following always their life, customs, and discipline.'

Then said Wilfrid: 'It is evident that Anatolius was a man most holy, most learned, and most worthy of praise. But what have you to do with him, since you do not follow his decrees? For he, indeed, following the rule of truth in his paschal feast, appointed a cycle of nineteen years¹, which you are either ignorant of or else contemn as of no account, although it is recognised and kept by the whole

¹ The Council of Nice, A.D. 325, to find more easily the first day of the moon, and consequently the fourteenth day, ordered that the Church should be guided by the cycle of nineteen years, which had been fixed A.C. 430 by the Athenian Meton.

Church of Christ. He so computed the fourteenth day of the moon in the Lord's paschal feast, that after the manner of the Egyptians he acknowledged it to be the fifteenth day of the moon on the very same day, at evening¹. So also he assigned the twentieth to Easter Sunday, as believing this to be the twenty-first, when the same day had come to an end. It proves that you are ignorant of the rule of this distinction, in that you sometimes keep the paschal feast most manifestly before the full moon, that is, on the thirteenth day of the moon. Moreover, concerning your father Columba and his followers, whose sanctity you say that you imitate, and that you follow his rule and precepts confirmed by celestial signs, I could reply, that to many who shall say to the Lord in the judgment that they have prophesied in His name, and cast out devils, and done many wonderful works, the Lord will answer that He never knew them². But far be it from me to say this concerning your fathers, because it is much more just to believe what is good than what is evil, concerning persons unknown to us. Wherefore I deny not that they were servants of God and beloved by God, who loved God with rustic simplicity but pious intention. Nor do I think that such observance of Easter was of much harm to them, as long as no one had come to show them the decrees of a more perfect institute which

¹ The fourteenth day of the moon, according to the reckoning of the Egyptians and Jews, who reckoned their days from evening to evening, would begin on the evening of the day called by the Britons the fourteenth day of the moon, and end on the evening of the day which the Britons called the fifteenth. So also the Jewish twentieth day of the moon would begin on the evening of the Britons' twentieth day, and end on the evening of their twenty-first day.

² Matt. vii. 22.

they might follow; and I verily believe that if any Catholic computer had come at that time to them, they would have been as ready to follow his monitions as they are proved to have followed those commands of God which they had known and learnt. You, however, and your friends, without any doubt, transgress if you neglect to follow the decrees of the apostolic see, yea, of the universal Church, which you have heard, and these too confirmed by the sacred writings. For, although your fathers were holy, is their small number, from one corner of a very remote island, to be preferred to the universal Church of Christ which is throughout the world? And even if that Columba of yours, yea, ours also, if he was Christ's, was holy and powerful in wonderful works, could he therefore be preferred to the most blessed chief of the apostles, to whom the Lord said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven¹."

On Wilfrid thus concluding his speech, the king said, 'Is it true, Colman, that those words were said to that Peter by the Lord?' And he said, 'It is true, O king.' Then said he, 'Can you show any such power given to your Columba?' And he said, 'None.' Again the king said, 'Do you both agree on this point without any controversy, that these words were said especially to Peter, and that the keys of the kingdom of heaven were given him by the Lord?' They both answered, 'Yes, certainly.' Then he concluded thus, 'And I tell you that he is that door-keeper whom I will not contradict, but as far as I know or have

¹ Matt. xvi. 18.

power, I desire in all things to obey his decrees, lest, perchance, when I come to the doors of the kingdom of heaven, there may be no one to unlock them for me, if he is averse who is proved to have the keys.'

The king having said this, all those who were sitting or standing by applauded, nobles together with ordinary persons; and having renounced the less perfect institution, they hastened to adopt that which they had found to be better. .

CHAPTER XXVI.

How Colman, being vanquished, returned home; and how Tuda undertook the episcopate in his stead, and what was the state of the Church under these teachers.

THE conflict being ended and the assembly dismissed, Agilberct returned home¹. Colman, seeing his doctrine contemned and his party despised, having taken with him those who were willing to follow him, that is, who would not receive the Catholic paschal feast, and the tonsure of the crown (for concerning this also there was no small dispute), returned into Scotland to consult with his people what he ought to do concerning these things. Cedd, having left the practices of the Scots, returned to his own see, as, forsooth, having adopted the observance of the Catholic Easter. Moreover, this question was raised in the year of the Lord's incarnation 664, which was the twenty-second year of King

¹ To Gaul, where he had been made bishop of Paris, A.D. 660. See Chap. vii. Florence of Worcester says that Wilfrid was consecrated by Agilberct, A.D. 664.

Oswy; also it was the thirtieth year of the episcopate of the Scots which they maintained in the province of the Angles. For Aidan held the episcopate seventeen years, Finan ten, and Colman three years.

Moreover, when Colman had returned to his country, Tuda, the servant of Christ, took, in his place, the pontificate of the Northumbrians, having been instructed and ordained bishop among the Southern Scots, and having, according to the custom of that province, the crown of ecclesiastical tonsure, and observing the Catholic rule of the time of the paschal feast. He was a good man indeed and religious, but ruled the Church for a very short time. Moreover, he had come from Scotland while Colman still held the pontificate, and used diligently to teach both by word and work those things which pertain to faith and truth. Moreover, Eata, a man most reverend and meek, who was abbot in the monastery that is called Mailros, was appointed with the jurisdiction of abbot over those brethren who preferred to remain in the church of Lindisfarne when the Scots departed. This they say that Colman, when about to depart, requested and obtained of King Oswy, because that the same Eata was one of Aidan's twelve boys whom, in the early days of his episcopate, he had taken from the nation of the Angles to be instructed in the knowledge of Christ. For the king greatly loved the same bishop Colman for his innate prudence. This is the same Eata who not long after was made bishop of the same church of Lindisfarne. Moreover, Colman, when he departed home, took with him part of the bones of the most reverend father Aidan, but left

part of them in the church over which he had presided, ordering them to be interred in the sacristy.

Moreover, the place which they governed shows how great was the frugality and how great the continence both of himself and his predecessors, for at their departure very few houses besides the church were found there, that is, those only without which civilized communion could in no degree exist. They had no money, but only cattle. For if they received any money from the rich, it was their custom presently to give it to the poor; for it was not necessary either that money should be collected or houses provided for the reception of the powerful of the world, who never came to the church except only for prayer and hearing the word of God. The king himself, when occasion required, came with only five or six of his servants, and, when prayer in the church was ended, departed. But if it happened that they took refreshment there, they were content with the plain and daily fare only of the brethren, and required nothing more. For the whole thought of these teachers at that time was to serve God, not the world—their whole care to cater for the heart, not the belly. Whence also the religious habit was held in great veneration at that time, so that wheresoever any clergyman or monk came, he was joyfully received by all as the servant of God; even if he was seen proceeding on a journey, they ran to him, and with bended neck were glad either to be signed by his hand or blessed by his mouth; also they gave heed diligently to his words of exhortation. Moreover, on Sundays they vied with each other in flocking to the church or to the monasteries, not for the sake of refreshing the body, but of hearing the

word of God; and if any one of the priests came by chance into a village, presently the villagers congregated together, and took care to demand of him the word of life. For neither did the priests themselves, nor clerics, go to the villages on any other account than to preach, baptize, visit the sick, and as I may say in brief, take charge of souls; and they were so much purified from all the pest of avarice, that none of them received lands and possessions for building monasteries, unless compelled¹ by the powerful of this world; which custom was universally observed for some time afterwards in the churches of the Northumbrians. But enough has been said on this subject.

CHAPTER XXVII.

How Ecgberct, a holy man of the nation of the Angles, led a monastic life in Ireland.

IN the same year of the Lord's incarnation 664, there was an eclipse of the sun on the third day of the month of May², about the tenth hour of the day. In which year also a sudden pestilential contagion, having first depopulated the southern districts of Britain, attacked the province of the Northumbrians, raged for a long time far and wide with severe destruction, and destroyed a great multitude of men. By which plague Tuda, the aforesaid priest of the Lord, was taken from this world, and he was honourably buried

¹ See Chap. xxiii.

² The eclipse happened on the 1st, not the 3rd, of May. See Tigernach ad a. 664.

in the monastery which is called Pægnalæch¹. Moreover, this plague afflicted also with like destruction the island of Ireland. At that time a great number of the nobles and also of the lower orders of the nation of the Angles were there, who in the time of the bishops Finan and Colman, left their native island and retired thither, either for the sake of Divine reading, or of a more continent life. And some, indeed, afterwards faithfully devoted themselves to a monastic life; others chose rather to give attention to Divine reading, and to go round from one master's cell to another. The Scots most willingly received all of them, and took care to afford them daily food without cost, and also books to read, and instruction, gratuitously.

There were among them two young men of great natural excellence, of noble families of the Angles, Ædilhun and Ecgberct, the former of whom was the brother of Ædilwin, a man no less beloved by God, who also, in time following, went to Ireland for the sake of reading, and having been well instructed, returned to his country, and being made bishop in the province of Lindissis, ruled the Church most nobly for a long time². These two, then, being in the monastery which is called in the language of the Scots Rathmelsigi³, and all their companions having been snatched away from this world by a mortality, or dispersed in other places, were both seized with an attack of the same dis-

¹ Finchale, near Durham. (Smith.)

² Ædilwin was the second bishop of Sidnacester, from A.D. 679 to A.D. 701.

³ Now Melfont. So called from Rath, 'town,' and Mel, the disciple and nephew of St. Patrick. See Jocelin's Life of Patrick, Chaps. l. cii. clxxxvi.

temper, and most grievously afflicted. Of these, Ecgberct (as a certain presbyter of the greatest veracity, and of a venerable hoariness, related to me, who said that he heard these things from the man himself), when he thought that he was about to die, went forth in the morning from the chamber where the sick lay, and sitting alone in a convenient place, began seriously to think of his actions; and feeling compunction at the remembrance of his sins, he bedewed his face with tears, and prayed from his inmost heart to God, that he might not die before he either could more perfectly repent, as time should be given him, of the sins of omission which he had been guilty of in boyhood, or in infancy, or might exercise himself more abundantly in good works. He also vowed a vow, that he would live so entirely abroad, that he would never return to the island in which he was born, that is, Britain; that, besides the customary psalmody of canonical times, he would, if the state of his bodily health did not prevent him, daily chant the whole Psalter, to make remembrance of the Divine praise; and that every week he would fast a whole day and night. And when, having ended his tears, and prayers, and vows, he returned home, he found his companion asleep, and he also laid himself on his pallet, and began to compose his limbs to rest. And when he had rested for a short time, his companion awaking, looked on him and said, 'O brother Ecgberct, O what have you done? I hoped that we were alike about to enter into eternal life; but know, however, that you shall receive what you have asked for.' For he had learnt by a vision both what he had requested, and that he had obtained his request.

Why many words? *Ædilhun* himself died the next night; but *Ecgeberct*, having shaken off the grievousness of his distemper, became well, and lived a long time afterwards, adorning the grade of the priesthood, which he received, by actions worthy of it, and, after many gifts of virtues, as he himself had desired, lately, that is, in the year of the Lord's incarnation 729, when he was ninety years old, departed to the celestial kingdom. Moreover, he led his life in great perfection of humility, meekness, continence, simplicity, and justice. Whence he was very profitable both to his own nation, and to those nations of Scots or Picts among whom he lived in exile, by his example of living, his instancy in teaching, his authority in admonishing, and his piety in bestowing of those things which he had received from the rich. Moreover, he added to the vows which I have spoken of, that always on the forty days' fast he took food only once in the day, and tasted nothing but bread and the thinnest milk, and even this by measure; which milk, to wit, new the day before, he was wont to put in a bowl, and after night, having skimmed off the thicker surface, he used to take what was left with a little bread. Which rule of abstinence he also took care to observe during the forty days before Christmas Day, and the same number of days after the solemnity of Pentecost, that is, the Quinquagesimal Feast, was ended.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

How, when Tuda was dead, Wilfrid in Gaul, and Ceadda among the West Saxons, were ordained bishops of the province of the Northumbrians.

IN the meantime, King Alchfrid ¹ sent the presbyter Wilfrid ² to the king of Gaul ³, that he should cause him to be consecrated bishop for himself and his people. And he sent him to be ordained to Agilberct ⁴, who, as I have before said, left Britain, and was made bishop of the city of Paris; and by him Wilfrid was consecrated with great honour, several bishops meeting together in the king's village, which is called In Compendio ⁵. And while he still tarried in parts beyond the sea, on account of his ordination, King Oswy, imitating his son's zeal, sent to Kent a holy man, modest in manners, amply instructed in the reading of the Scriptures, and diligently practising those things which in the Scriptures he had learnt should be done, that he might be ordained bishop of the Church of York. Moreover, he was a presbyter, by name Ceadda, a brother of the most reverend prelate Ceddi, of whom I have often made mention ⁶, and

¹ Made king of Deira by his father Oswy. At this time he proposed to go to Rome with Biscop Benedictus, but was stopped by Oswy. Vit. Abbat. ii. 2.

² See Bk. V. Chap. xix.

³ Clothaire III, king of Neustria, who reigned from A.D. 662 to 676.

⁴ Cf. Chap. vii.

⁵ Compiègne, at the confluence of the Aisne and Oise. Here a synod was held in the reign of Pepin; and Charles the Bald built a monastery here in honour of the Virgin, which is now called by the name of S. Cornelius. Mabill. Ann. xiv. 57.

⁶ See Chaps. xxi. xxii. xxiii. xxvi.

abbot of the monastery which is called Læstingæu. Also the king sent with him his presbyter, by name Eadhæd, who afterwards, in the reign of Ecgfrid, was made prelate of the Church of Hrypum. But on coming to Kent, they found that the archbishop Deusdedit had already departed from this world, and that as yet no other prelate had been appointed in his place. Wherefore they departed to the province of the West Saxons, where Vini was bishop, and by him the aforesaid person was consecrated bishop; two bishops of the nation of the Britons who keep Easter Sunday, as has been often said, according to¹ the canonical custom, from the fourteenth to the twentieth day of the moon, having been taken to assist at the ordination. For indeed there was no bishop except this Vini², in the whole of Britain, canonically ordained. Ceadda, then, having been consecrated bishop, presently began to take heed to ecclesiastical truth and chastity; and to apply himself to humility, continence, and reading; to travel about to cities, rural districts, cottages, villages, and castles, for the sake of preaching the Gospel, not on horseback, but after the manner of the apostles, on foot. For he was one of the disciples of Aidan, and took care to instruct his hearers by the same actions and morals, according to his and his brother Ceddi's example. Wilfrid, too, being now made a bishop, coming into Britain, himself also brought very many rules of catholic observance to the churches of the Angles by his teaching. Whence it came to pass that, the catholic

¹ *secus* = *secundum*. 'Contrary to,' would be better. Perhaps Bede intended the latter sense.

² Vini was ordained in Gaul. See Chap. vii.

institution gaining strength daily, all the Scots that dwelt among the Angles either submitted to them, or returned to their own country.

CHAPTER XXIX.

How the presbyter Vighard was sent from Britain to Rome to be ordained archbishop; and presently a letter of the apostolic pope was sent to say that he had died there.

AT this time¹, the most noble kings of the Angles, Oswy of the province of the Northumbrians, and Ecgberct of that of the Cantuarii, having taken counsel together as to what should be done respecting the state of the Church of the Angles (for Oswy, although educated by the Scots, rightly understood that the Roman was the catholic and apostolic Church), took to them, by the choice and consent of the holy Church of the English nation, a presbyter by name Vighard², a good man, and fit for the episcopate, one of Bishop Deusdedit's clergy, and sent him to Rome to be ordained bishop, in order that he himself, having received the degree of the archiepiscopate, might ordain catholic bishops for the churches of the Angles throughout all Britain.

But Vighard, coming to Rome, was snatched away by death before he could be consecrated bishop, and such a letter as this was sent back to King Oswy to Britain:—

‘To the most excellent lord, my son, Oswy king of the

¹ A.D. 667. Sax Chron., Florence.

² He was the first of the secular clergy who became archbishop of Canterbury. Stevenson, Eng. Ch. Historians.

Saxons, Vitalian, bishop, servant of the servants of God. We received your excellency's desirable letters, on reading which we perceived your most pious devotion, and the very fervent love which you have for the blessed life, and how you were converted by the protecting hand of the Lord to the true and apostolic faith, in the hope that as you reign in your own nation, so at some future time you might reign together with Christ. Blessed therefore is the nation which was worthy to have such a most wise king and worshipper of God. Because not only he himself is a worshipper of God, but also studies day and night that all his subjects may be converted to the catholic and apostolic faith, for the redemption of their souls. For who will not rejoice at hearing these delightful things? Who will not exult and be glad in these pious works? Because also your nation has believed in Christ the omnipotent God, according to the words of the Divine prophets, as it is written in Isaiah ¹: "In that day a root of Jesse, which stands for an ensign of the peoples, to it shall the Gentiles pay their devotion." And again ²: "Hear ye isles, and attend ye peoples from afar." And a little after³, he says, "It is a small thing that thou shouldest be my servant for raising up the tribes of Jacob, and converting the dregs of Israel. I have given thee for a light of the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." And again ⁴: "Kings shall see, princes also shall arise and adore." And a very little after ⁵: "I have given thee for a covenant of the people, that thou mightest establish the earth, and possess the

¹ Isaiah xi. 10.² Ib. xlix. 1.³ Ib. 6.⁴ Ib. 7.⁵ Ib. 8.

desolate heritages, and say to those who are bound, Go forth; and to those who are in darkness, Be brought to light." And again¹, "I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and have taken hold of thy hand and kept thee, and have given thee for a covenant of the people, and for a light of the Gentiles, that thou mightest open the eyes of the blind, and lead forth those who are bound from bondage, and those who sit in darkness from the prison-house." Behold, most excellent son, how clearer than the light was the prophecy not only concerning you, but also concerning all the Gentiles, that they should believe in Christ the Maker of all things. Wherefore it behoves your highness, as being a member of Christ, constantly to follow in all things the pious rule of the chief of the apostles, both in the keeping of Easter, and in all things which the holy apostles Peter and Paul have delivered, who, by their doctrine daily give light to the hearts of believing men, as the two luminaries of heaven enlighten the world.'

And after a few other things², in which he speaks of the keeping of one true paschal feast through the whole world:—

¹ Isaiah xlii. 6, 7.

² Here, as in Bk. II. Chap. xix., Bede omits a passage which relates to the celebration of Easter. Usher, however, supplies the defect from a MS. inscribed 'Vitalini,' intended doubtless for 'Vitaliani,' in the monastery at Whitby. 'Nunquam enim celebrare debemus sanctum pascha nisi secundum apostolicam et catholicam fidem, ut in toto orbe celebratur a Christiana plebe, id est, secundum apostolicam regulam cccxviii sanctorum patrum, et computum SS. Cyrilli et Dionysii. Nam in toto terrarum orbe sic Christi una columba, hoc est ecclesia immaculata sanctum Paschæ Resurrectionis diem celebrat. Nam Victoris regulam paschæ sedes apostolica non approbavit, ideo nec sequitur dispositionem ejus pro pascha.' Vet. Epp. Hib. Syll., ep. ix. p. 126.

‘Finally,’ he says, ‘we have not been able at present to find, on account of the length of the journey, a man teachable, and a prelate adorned in all respects, according to the tenor of your letters. For assuredly, when such a fit person shall be found, we will send him with instructions to your country, that he himself, by his own word of mouth, and by the Divine oracles, may, with the blessing of God, root out all the enemy’s tares from the whole of your island. We have received the gifts sent by your highness to the blessed chief of the apostles, for his eternal remembrance, and we give you thanks, and constantly pray with the clergy of Christ to God for your weal. But he who brought these gifts has been removed from this light¹, and is buried at the apostles’ church, and we were very grieved on his account, because he died here. However, we have sent your people as the bearers of these our letters, and have ordered benefits of the saints, that is, relics of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and of the holy martyrs Lawrence, John, and Paul, and Gregory, and Pancratius², to be given to them, forthwith to be delivered to your excellency; and to your consort also, our spiritual daughter, we have sent by the aforesaid bearers a cross, having a golden key, made out of the most sacred chains of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul; having knowledge of whose pious zeal, the whole apostolic see rejoices with us, as much as her pious works smell sweet and bloom before God.

‘Let your highness therefore hasten, we beseech you,

¹ de hac luce.

² St. Pancras, who suffered martyrdom during the Diocletian persecution, A.D. 304.

to dedicate to Christ your whole island, according to our desire. For you assuredly have for your protector the Redeemer of mankind, our Lord Jesus Christ, who will make you prosperous in all things, that you may increase the new people of Christ, establishing there the catholic and apostolic faith. For it is written¹, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." For indeed you seek and have obtained it; and all your islands, we hope, shall become subject to you. So with paternal affection saluting your excellency, we constantly pray the Divine clemency to deign to assist you and all your people in all good works, that you may reign with Christ in the world to come. May grace from above keep your excellency safe.'

In the next Book it will be more suitably told who in truth was found and consecrated bishop in Vighard's place.

CHAPTER XXX.

How the East Saxons, in the time of the mortality, returned to idolatry, but were afterwards corrected from their error by the instancy of Bishop Jaruman.

AT the same time, the kings Sighere² and Sebbi³ ruled over the province of the East Saxons after Suidhelm, of

¹ Matt. vi. 33.

² Son of Sigberct surnamed the Little, and husband of St. Osyth, the daughter of Frithewald, king of Surrey, and Wilburh, daughter of Penda.

³ Son of Sæward, one of the apostate sons of the first Christian king of the East Saxons, Saberct, and brother of Sigberct the Little. He resigned his kingdom, and died in A.D. 694.

whom I have spoken above¹, although themselves subject to Wulfhere, king of the Mercians. When that province, to wit, was afflicted with the calamity of the aforesaid pestilence, Sighere, with his part of the people, having left the sacraments of the Christian faith, turned to apostasy; for both the king himself, and very many of the common people and the nobles, loving this life, and not seeking the life to come, or even not believing that there was any, began to restore the fanes which they had deserted, and to worship images, as if by these means they could be defended from the mortality: Further, Sebbi his associate, and coheir of the same kingdom, with all his people, kept with great devotion the faith which he had received, and with great happiness, as I shall relate in what follows, ended a faithful life.

Which when King Wulfhere perceived—to wit, that the faith of the province was in part profaned—he sent Bishop Jaruman², who was the successor of Trumhere, to correct the error and recall the province to the true faith; who acting with great skill (as a presbyter informed me, who was his companion during his journey, and his fellow-labourer in the Word), for he was a religious and good man, and travelling through all parts, far and wide, brought back both the aforesaid people and king to the way of righteousness, so that, having forsaken or destroyed those fanes and altars which they had made, they opened the churches, and rejoiced to confess the name of Christ, which they had spoken against, being more desirous to die in Him

¹ Chap. xxii.

² Chap. xxiv.

with the belief of the resurrection, than to live in the filth of misbelief among idols. Having effected these things, both the priests themselves and their teachers returned home rejoicing.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER I.

How, when Deusdedit was dead, Vighard was sent to Rome to receive the episcopate ; but on his dying there, Theodore was ordained archbishop, and sent to Britain with the abbot Hadrian.

IN the above-mentioned year¹ of the aforesaid eclipse and of the pestilence that presently followed, in which also Bishop Colman, being overcome by the unanimous opinion of the Catholics, returned to his own people, Deusdedit², the sixth bishop of the Church of Canterbury, died the day before the Ides of July³; and also Erconberct, king of the Cantuarii, died on the same month and day, and left the throne of his kingdom to Ecgberct his son, who received and occupied it nine years⁴. Then, the episcopate being vacant for no short time⁵, the presbyter Vighard, of the nation of the Angles, a man most learned in ecclesiastical discipline, was sent to Rome by him, and

¹ A.D. 664.

² The Liber Cantuariensis states that his original name was Fritonas.

³ July 14.

⁴ He died A.D. 673. See Chap. v.

⁵ From July 5, 664, to March 26, 668.

also by Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, as I briefly stated in the preceding Book¹, with a request that he might be ordained archbishop of the Church of the Angles, presents being sent at the same time to the apostolic pope, and gold and silver vessels not a few. And when he arrived at Rome, where Vitalian at that time presided over the apostolic see, after he had made known to the aforesaid apostolic pope the cause of his journey, not long subsequently both he and nearly all his companions who had come with him, were destroyed by a pestilence coming upon them.

But the apostolic pope, having taken counsel concerning these things, sought with diligence for one whom he might send as archbishop of the English Churches. Moreover, there was in the monastery of Hiridandum, which is not far from Neapolis in Campania, an abbot, by name Hadrian, a man by nation an African, well versed in Holy Writ, instructed in both monastic and ecclesiastical discipline, and very well skilled in the Greek and Latin tongues. This man the pope ordered to be summoned to him, and commanded him to receive the episcopate, and to go to Britain. And he, replying that he was unworthy of so great a dignity, said that he could point out another, whose age as well as erudition were more suitable for undertaking the episcopate. And when he proposed to the pontiff a certain monk from a neighbouring convent of virgins, by name Andrew, he was judged worthy of the episcopate by all who knew him. But the weight of bodily infirmity was an obstacle to his being made bishop. And again Hadrian was urged to accept the episcopate; but he sought for respite,

¹ Bk. III. Chap. xxix.

if by chance, having time given him, he could find another who might be ordained bishop.

There was at that time in Rome a monk, known to Hadrian, by name Theodore, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, a man versed in both secular and Divine literature, and instructed in both Greek and Latin, approved in morals, and venerable through age, that is, being sixty-six years old. Hadrian proposed this man to the pontiff, and obtained that he should be ordained bishop; these conditions only being added, that he himself should conduct him to Britain, because he had already on one account or other gone twice to the parts of Gaul¹, and for that reason knew better how to accomplish the journey, and was sufficiently provided with men of his own; and also in order that, being his fellow-labourer in doctrine, he might diligently take heed that he did not introduce anything after the manner of the Greeks, contrary to the truth of the faith, into the Church over which he presided. And he, being ordained subdeacon, waited four months until his hair should be grown, so that it might be shorn after the manner of a crown. For he had the tonsure of the holy apostle Paul, after the manner of the Easterns². He was ordained by Pope Vitalian, in the year of the Lord's incarnation 668, on Sunday, the seventh day of the Kalends of April³. And

¹ Hence, probably, he was more suspected than Theodore by Ebrinus.

² The tonsure was of three kinds: (1) The Greek, or St. Paul's, which consisted in shaving the whole head; (2) The Scottish, or that of Simon Magus, as it was opprobriously called, on the fore part of the head, from ear to ear; (3) The Roman, or St. Peter's, circular, on the crown of the head.

³ March 26.

so he was sent with Hadrian to Britain, on the sixth day before the Ka'ends of June.

And when they had gone together by sea to Marseilles, and thence by land to Arles, and had delivered to John, the archbishop of that city, Pope Vitalian's letters of recommendation, they were detained by him until Ebrinus, the mayor of the king's palace, gave them leave to go where they pleased. Having received which leave, Theodore went to Agilberct, bishop of Paris, of whom I have spoken above ¹, and was kindly received by him, and entertained a long time. Hadrian went first to Emme, bishop of the Senones ², and afterwards to Faro, bishop of the Meldi ³, and was well entertained by them a long time, for the approach of winter had compelled them to stop and rest wherever they could. Which when sure messengers had told King Ecgberct, to wit that the bishop whom they had asked of the Roman pontiff was in the kingdom of the Franks, he forthwith sent thither his prefect Rædfrid to conduct him; who, when he had arrived there, took Theodore, with Ebrinus' leave, and brought him to the port called Quentavic, where, suffering from illness, he stayed a little while; and when he began to recover, sailed to Britain. But Ebrinus detained Hadrian, since he suspected that he had some mission from the emperor ⁴ to the kings of Britain, adverse to the kingdom of which he then took the principal charge. But

¹ Bk. III. Chaps. xxv. xxvi. xxviii.

² Bishop of Sens from A.D. 658 to 675.

³ Or Burgundofaro, bishop of Meaux from A.D. 626 to 672.

⁴ Constantine Pogonatus, who, in September this year, succeeded his father Constans II. This year, also, on the death of Clothaire III., Ebrinus had raised Childeric to the monarchy, in opposition to his brother Theodoric.

when he had found of a truth that he neither was nor had been possessed of any such commission, he let him depart, and permitted him to go after Theodore. And he, as soon as he came to him¹, received from him the monastery² of the blessed apostle Peter, where the archbishops of Canterbury are, as I before said³, usually buried. For the apostolic ruler had before charged Theodore, when he departed, that he should provide for him in his diocese, and give him a suitable place in which he might reside with his followers.

CHAPTER II.

How, on Theodore's visiting all parts, the Churches of the Angles began to be instructed in Catholic truth, and also in the studies of sacred letters, and how Putta was made bishop of the Church of Hrof, in the place of Damianus.

MOREOVER, Theodore came to his church in the second year after his consecration, on the sixth day of the Kalends of June⁴, being Sunday, and spent in it twenty-one years, three months, and twenty-six days. And presently, having travelled through the whole island⁵, wheresoever the nations

¹ He came to England the year after he had been sent by the pope, i.e. A.D. 669. Cf. Bk. V. Chap. xx.

² Biscop Benedict, who accompanied Theodore to England, had the monastery given to him, but after ruling it two years he returned to Rome, and Hadrian succeeded him as abbot. Hist. Abbat. iii.

³ Bk. I. Chap. xxxiii.; Bk. II. Chap. iii.

⁴ May 27.

⁵ 'Acceperat enim legationis potestatem a præfato apostolico papa (Vitaliano) super Angliam, Scotiam, et Hiberniam.' Thorne, col. 1769.

of the Angles dwelt, for he was most gladly received and heard by all, he disseminated the right rule of living, and the canonical rite of celebrating Easter, Hadrian attending and co-operating with him on all occasions. He was the first archbishop to whom all the Church of the Angles consented to submit, and because, as I have said, they were both amply instructed in sacred as well as secular literature, a crowd of disciples being congregated, rivers of salutary science daily flowed for the irrigation of their hearts, so that they even delivered to their hearers the rules of ecclesiastical metrical art, astronomy, and arithmetic¹, together with the volumes of sacred letters. A proof of which is, that even to this day some of their disciples are living, who know the Latin and Greek tongues as well as they do their own in which they were born. Never at all, from the time that the Angles directed their course to Britain, were happier times; whilst having most brave and Christian kings, they were a terror to all barbarous nations, and the desires of all inclined to the late-heard-of joys of the celestial kingdom, and whoever desired to be instructed in sacred reading had masters at hand to teach them. Moreover, from this time, through all the churches of the Angles, they began to learn the notes of singing in the church, which up to that time they had only known in Kent, and the first master of singing in the churches of the Nordanhymbri, with the exception of James, of whom I have above spoken², was Æddi³,

¹ The art of calculating Church seasons, which is the subject of Bede's book, *De Ratione Temporum*.

² Bk. II. Chaps. xvi. xx.; Bk. III. Chap. xxv.

³ The author of a *Life of Wilfrid*.

surnamed Stephen, invited from Kent¹ by the most reverend man Wilfrid, who first, among the bishops who were of the English nation, learnt to deliver the catholic rule of living to the English Churches. Theodore then visiting all parts ordained bishops in opportune places, and, with the assistance of these, corrected also those things which he found defective. Among which, when he objected that Bishop Ceadda had not been rightly consecrated², he, answering with most humble voice, said, ‘If you know that I have received the episcopate unlawfully, I willingly resign the office, since, forsooth, I have never thought myself worthy of it, but for the sake of obedience, when ordered to undertake it, I consented, although unworthy.’ Then he, hearing his humble reply, said that he should not resign the episcopate, and himself completed his ordination afresh, after the catholic manner. Moreover, at that time, when, after Deusdedit was dead, a bishop for the Church of Canterbury was being sought, ordained, and sent, Wilfrid also was sent from Britain to Gaul to be ordained; and because he returned before Theodore, he himself also

¹ Wilfrid returned from Gaul A.D. 666, having been ordained bishop of York by Agilberct, and, finding that Ceadda was exercising the functions of that bishopric, retired to the monastery of Ripon for three years. Meanwhile he occasionally performed episcopal ministrations in Mercia, at the request of King Wulfhere, and in Kent, by the invitation of Ecgberct, during the vacancy of the see of Canterbury. He brought with him from Kent the singers Hædde and Æon, ‘cum cæmentariis omnisque pene artis ministerio in regionem suam, cum regula Benedicti, et instituta ecclesiarum melioravit.’ Hædde, Vit. Vilfr. xiv.

² The objections to Ceadda’s consecration were, first, that Wilfrid was already bishop of York; and, next, that two British bishops, who kept Easter uncanonically, had assisted at it.

ordained priests and deacons in Kent, until the archbishop came to his see. And he¹, coming afterwards to the city of Hrofi, where, on the demise of Damian, the episcopate had for a long time been vacant, ordained a man more instructed in ecclesiastical rules, and contented with simplicity of life, than active in the affairs of the world, whose name was Putta, and who, moreover, was especially skilled in chanting in the church after the manner of the Romans, which he had learnt from the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory.

CHAPTER III.

How Ceadda, above mentioned, was appointed bishop for the province of the Mercians; and concerning his life, and death, and sepulture.

AT that time, when King Wulfhere, who ruled over the province of the Mercians, on the death of Jaruman, desired of Theodore that a bishop should be granted to himself and his people, Theodore would not ordain a new bishop for them, but requested of King Oswy that Bishop Ceadda, who then was leading a quiet life in his monastery which is at Læstingæu, might be granted for their bishop, whilst Wilfrid administered the episcopate of the Church of York, and also of all the Northumbrians, and besides of the Picts, as far as King Oswy was able to extend his sway. And

¹ Theodore, probably. Hædde (xiv.) mentions Putta as one of the priests ordained by Wilfrid. For the reason of Ceadda's retirement, see Bk. V. Chap. xix.

because it was the custom of this most reverend prelate to accomplish the work of the Gospel more by walking from place to place than by riding, Theodore ordered him, whenever he took a long journey, to ride, and on his being reluctant, through zeal and love of pious labour, he himself with his own hands lifted him on the horse, because, forsooth, he found him to be a holy man, and compelled him to ride on horseback wherever it was necessary. Ceadda then took care to administer, in great perfection of life, according to the example of the ancient fathers, the episcopate of the nation of the Mercians, as well as of the Lindisfari, which he had received; and to him also King Wulfhere gave land of fifty families, to build a monastery in the place which is called Ad Baruæ¹, that is, At the Wood, in the province of Lindsey, in which unto this day vestiges of the regular life instituted by him still remain. Moreover, he had his episcopal see in the place which is called Lyccid-felth², in which he both died and was buried; where unto this day is also the see of the succeeding bishops of that province. But he had built for himself a retired mansion not far from the church, in which he was wont to pray and read more secretly with a few, that is, seven or eight brothers, as often as he was not occupied with the labour and ministry of the Word. And when he had most gloriously ruled the Church in that province two years and a half, a time came, by the appointment of the judgment of the Highest, concerning which Ecclesiastes says³, that ‘There is a time to

¹ Barrow, near Goxhill, in Lincolnshire. (Stevenson.) Barton-on-Humber. (Smith.)

² Lichfield.

³ Eccl. iii. 5.

cast away stones, and a time to gather them.' For an affliction divinely sent came upon them, which, through the death of the flesh, translated the living stones of the Church from their earthly stations to the celestial building. And when, very many of the Church of that most reverend prelate having been withdrawn from the flesh, his own hour came that he should pass from this world to the Lord, it chanced one day that he was abiding in the aforesaid mansion, with one brother only, called Ouini, his other companions having returned to the church for some opportune cause. Now this Ouini was a monk of great merit, having left the world purely for the sake of reward from above, and worthy in all respects to have the secrets of the Lord specially revealed to him; and worthy to have credit given by his hearers to what he said. For he had come with Queen *Ædilthryde*¹ from the province of the East Angles, and was the chief of her attendants and her major domo. And, when he was disposed through the increasing fervour of his faith to renounce the world, he was not remiss in doing this; but so divested himself of the things of the world, that, having left all that he had, he came clothed only in a plain garb, and carrying an axe and a hatchet in his hand, to the monastery of the same reverend father, which is called *Læstingæu*. For he signified that he did not enter the monastery for leisure, as some persons do², but for labour. Which very thing he also showed by his practice, for as he was incompetent for meditating on the Scriptures, therefore the more

¹ Her history is given in Chap. xix.

² A stricture upon some of his contemporaries. See his Epistle to Ecgberct.

diligently he employed himself in manual labour. In short, having been enrolled among the brethren, together with the bishop, in the aforesaid abode, on account of their reverence for his devotion, when they were occupied within in reading, he worked out of doors at those things which seemed needful. And when one day he was doing some such work out of doors, his companions having gone to the church, as I began to say, and the bishop, being alone in the oratory of the place, was attending to reading or prayer, he suddenly heard, as he afterwards related, a most sweet voice of persons singing and rejoicing descend from heaven even unto the earth; which voice, to wit, he said that he first heard from the south-east, that is, from the part of the sky above sunrise at the winter solstice¹, and that then by degrees it approached him, until it reached the roof of the oratory in which the bishop was, having entered which, it filled the whole of it, and encircled it about. And whilst he was reflecting anxiously on what he heard, after the space of about half an hour he again heard the same song of joy ascend from the roof of the same oratory, and return even unto heaven, with inexpressible sweetness, the same way it came. And when he had remained some part of an hour as if astounded, considering with anxious mind what this might be, the bishop opened the window of the oratory, and, making a noise with his hand, as he had been wont often to do, ordered that if any one was outside he should come in to him. He therefore went hastily in, and the prelate said, 'Go quickly to the church, and cause the seven brethren to come hither; you also be present likewise.' And when

¹ *ab alto brumalis exortus.*

they had come, he first admonished them that they should cherish the virtue of love and peace one to another, and towards all the faithful; also, that they should follow with unwearied diligence the institutions of regular discipline, which they had either learnt from him or seen him practise, or had observed in the deeds or words of the former fathers. Then he added, that the day of his decease was now very near: 'For,' said he, 'that amiable guest who was wont to visit our brethren, has deigned also to come to me to-day, and to call me from the world. Wherefore, returning to the church, tell the brethren both to commend my departure to the Lord in their prayers, and to remember to prepare for their own departure, the hour of which is uncertain, by vigils, prayers, and good works.' And when he had said this, and more of the same kind, and they, having received his benediction, had now in much sadness gone forth, he who had heard the heavenly song returned alone, and prostrating himself on the earth, said, 'Father, I entreat you, may I ask something?' 'Ask,' said he, 'what you will.' And he said, 'I beseech you to tell me what that song was that I heard of persons rejoicing, coming down from heaven above this oratory, and, after a time, returning to heaven?' He answered, 'If you heard the voice of the song, and perceived the heavenly companies coming down, I charge you, in the name of the Lord, not to tell this to any one before my decease. For, in truth, they were angelic spirits who came to call me to the heavenly rewards which I always loved and desired; and promised that they would return after seven days, and take me with them.' Which indeed was fulfilled by the event, just as it was told

him. For he was presently attacked by a bodily ailment, and this increasing daily, on the seventh day, as it had been promised him, after he had prepared for his departure by the receiving of the Lord's body and blood, his holy soul being freed from the prison of the body, went under the guidance, as it is right to believe, of attendant angels to eternal joys. Moreover, it is no wonder if he beheld with joy the day of his death, or rather the Lord's day, which he always took care anxiously to expect till it came.

For together with his many merits of continence, humility, teaching, prayer, voluntary poverty, and the other virtues, he was so subject to the fear of the Lord, and in all his actions so mindful of his latter end, that—according as one of the brothers who instructed me in the Scriptures, and who was brought up in his monastery, and under his rule, by name Trumberct, was wont to relate—if by chance, whilst he was reading or doing any other thing, a strong blast of wind suddenly arose, he forthwith invoked the Lord's mercy, and begged that it might be propitious to mankind. If, however, a more violent gale came on, he now, shutting his book, fell on his face, and more earnestly applied himself to prayer. But if a more vehement storm of wind or rain raged greatly, or even lightnings¹ and thunder terrified the earth and air, then, going to the church, he anxiously employed himself, with fixed attention, in prayers and psalms, until the serenity of the air returned. And when he was asked by his people why he did this, he answered, 'Have you not read that "the Lord thundered from heaven, and the Highest gave forth His voice. He

¹ corusci.

sent forth His arrows and scattered them, He multiplied His lightnings, and troubled them¹." For the Lord moves the air, excites the winds, casts forth lightnings, and thunders from heaven, that He may excite the inhabitants of the earth to fear Him, that He may recall their hearts to the remembrance of the future judgment; that He may dispel their pride and confound their boldness, by bringing that tremendous time to their minds when He Himself, the heavens and earth being on fire, will come in the clouds with great power and majesty, to judge the quick and the dead. Wherefore,' said he, 'it behoves us to respond with due fear and love to His heavenly admonition, that, as often as, having troubled the air, He stretches forth His hand, as it were, threatening to strike, and still smites not as yet, we may presently implore His mercy, and searching into the inmost recesses of our hearts, and clearing out the rubbish² of our vices, be careful so to behave, that we may never deserve to be smitten.' Also, a discourse of the most reverend father Ecgberct, of whom I have above spoken³, agrees with the revelation and relation of the aforesaid brother, concerning the decease of this prelate, who formerly with the same Ceadda when a youth, himself also a youth, led sedulously a monastic life in Ireland⁴, in prayers, and continence, and meditation on the Divine Scriptures. But when, after a while, Ceadda had returned to his own country, he himself, for the Lord's sake, remained

¹ Ps. xviii. 13, 14.

² rudera.

³ Bk. III. Chap. xxvii.

⁴ Hence Hædde, in his Life of Wilfrid, xiv., says, 'Admirabilem doctorem de Hybernia insula venientem nomine Ceadda.' Ceadda was an Angle, Bk. III. Chap. xxi., and, apparently, a Northumbrian, Bk. III. Chap. xxiii.

abroad unto the end of his life. When, therefore, a most holy and continent man, by name Hygbald, who was abbot in the province of Lindsey, came, a long time after, from Britain to visit him, and, as became saints, they discoursed concerning the life of the former fathers, and rejoiced to emulate it, mention was made of the most reverend prelate Ceadda, and Ecgberct said, 'I know a person in this island yet abiding in the flesh, who, when that man departed from the world, saw the soul of his brother Ceddi descend from heaven with a company of angels, who having taken with them his soul, returned to the heavenly kingdom.' Whether he said this of himself or of some one else, remains to us uncertain; whilst nevertheless this, which so great a man said, cannot be uncertain as regards its truth. Moreover, Ceadda died on the sixth day¹ of the Nones of March, and was buried first indeed close by the church of Saint Mary, but after a while, when the church of the most blessed chief of the apostles, Peter, had been built there, his bones were translated into the same. In both which places, for a token of his virtue, frequent miracles of healings are wont to be wrought. In short, lately, a certain frensied person, as he went wandering through all parts, came there in the evening, the keepers of the place being unaware or careless, and having rested there the whole night, went forth in the morning with his senses restored, and showed, to the surprise and delight of all, what a cure he had there obtained by the Lord's gift. Moreover, the same place of his sepulchre is covered with a wooden monument, made like a small dwelling-house, having an opening in the

¹ March 2, A.D. 672.

wall, through which those who come there for the sake of devotion, are wont to put in their hand and take thence some of the dust, which, when they have put it in water, and given it to sick beasts of burden, or men, to drink, the grievance of their infirmity being presently removed, they return to the joys of desired health. In his place Theodore ordained Vynfrid, a good and modest man, who, like his predecessors, ruled in the office of the episcopate over the provinces of the Mercians and the Midland Angles and the Lindisfari: among all which, Wulfhere, who was still living, held the regal sceptre. Moreover, Vynfrid had been one of the clergy of that prelate whom he himself succeeded, and discharged the office of the diaconate under him for a considerable time.

CHAPTER IV.

How Bishop Colman, having left Britain, founded two monasteries in Scotland, one for the Scots, the other for the Angles whom he had brought thither with him.

IN the meantime, Colman, the Scottish bishop, leaving Britain, took with him all the Scots whom he had collected in the isle of Lindisfarne, and also about thirty men of the nation of the Angles, both which parties were versed in the studies of the monastic life. And, having left some brothers in his own Church, he came first to the isle of Hii, whence he had been sent to preach the Word to the nation of the Angles. Thence he retired to a certain small island, which is far removed from Ireland, towards the region of the west,

and is called in the Scottish language *Inisboufinde*¹, that is, the Island of the White Heifer. Arriving then here, he built a monastery, and placed in it monks, whom he had collected and brought from both nations. And when they could not agree with one another, because the Scots, in the summer-time, when the crops were to be brought in, left the monastery and wandered dispersed through places known to themselves, but nevertheless returned at the approach of winter and desired to use in common those things which the Angles had provided, Colman sought a remedy for this dissension, and going through all parts near or far off, found a place in the island of Ireland, suitable for building a monastery, which is called, in the tongue of the Scots, *Mageo*², and bought a small part of it, of the earl to whose possession it belonged, to build a monastery there, this condition being added, that for him also who had let them have the place, the monks abiding there should offer prayers to the Lord. And the monastery being presently built, the earl also and all the neighbours assisting, he placed the Angles there, leaving the Scots in the aforesaid island. This monastery, to wit, unto this day is occupied by English inhabitants. For it is the same which now having been made a large from a small one, is usually called *Muigeo*; and all things having long since been

¹ A small island, called now *Inisbofin*, off the west coast of co. Mayo. According to the *Ulster Annals*, Colman retired here A.D. 667. In this island *Rioch*, the nephew of St. Patrick, by his sister *Darercha*, is said to have had his episcopal see.

² Formerly a bishop's see, of which the last prelate was *Eugenius McBrehon*. It is now annexed to the archbishopric of Tuam.

changed to better institutions, it contains an excellent company of monks, who being collected there from the province of the Angles, live in great continence and sincerity, after the example of the venerable fathers, by their own manual labour, under a rule and a canonical abbot.

CHAPTER V.

Concerning the death of the kings Oswy and Ecgberct; and concerning the synod held at the place Herutforda¹, at which Archbishop Theodore presided.

IN the year of the Lord's incarnation 670, which is the second year after Theodore came to Britain, Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, was attacked with illness, of which he also died in the fifty-eighth year of his age; and he was at that time so greatly possessed with love of the Roman and apostolic institution, that he intended, if he had recovered from his illness, to go to Rome, and there to end his life at the holy places; and he had asked Wilfrid, the bishop, to be his guide in the journey, having promised him a large donation of money. He died on the fifteenth day² of the Kalends of March, and left his son Ecgfrid³ the heir of his kingdom, in the third year of whose reign Theodore

¹ Hertford.

² Feb. 15, A.D. 670.

³ He was born A.D. 645, see Chap. xxvi., and so was now twenty-five years old. According to the Constantinopolitan reckoning, the indiction began with Sept. 1, A.D. 673. But the Angles reckoned the indiction from Sept. 24 (the day on which the Synod was held), as Bede states, *De Temp. Rat.* 46.

assembled a council of bishops, together with many masters¹ of the Church, who both loved and understood the canonical statutes of the fathers. When they were collected together, he began, in that spirit which became a pontiff, to teach them that those things which suited the unity of ecclesiastical peace were to be diligently observed. Of which synodic action the text is as follows:—

‘In the name of the Lord God and our Saviour Jesus Christ (the same our Lord Jesus Christ reigning for ever, and governing His Church), it was thought fit that we should assemble according to the custom of the venerable canons, to treat concerning the necessary affairs of the Church. Moreover, we met on the twenty-fourth day of September, in the first indiction, in the place which is called Herutford. I, Theodore, indeed, although unworthy, appointed by the apostolic see bishop of the Church of Canterbury, and our fellow-priest and brother, the most reverend Bisi, bishop of the East Angles; with whom also our brother and fellow-priest Wilfrid, bishop of the nation of the Northumbrians, was represented by his appointed deputies. Also our brethren and fellow-priests Putta, bishop of the fortified town of the Cantuarii, which is called Hrofescæstir, Leutherius, bishop of the West Saxons, Vynfrid, bishop of the province of the Mercians, were present. And when, meeting together, we had sat down each

¹ *magistris*. Smith supposes that those of the clergy who were most learned and best instructed in ecclesiastical matters were called ‘*magistri*.’ Cf. Bk. III. Chap. xxvii. Vincentius of Lirins uses the word in this sense. In Ireland the term was applied to the preceptors or teachers of the monks. Cf. Bk. IV. Chap. xxvii.

according to his order, I said, "I entreat you, most beloved brethren, for the fear and love of our Redeemer, that we all advise in common for our faith; that whatsoever things have been decreed and defined by holy and approved fathers, may be observed uncorruptedly by us all." I said these and very many other things that tended to charity and the preservation of the unity of the Church. And when I had finished my prelocution, I asked each one of them in order if they would agree to maintain those things which were of old canonically decreed by the fathers. To which all our fellow-priests said in answer, "It pleases all of us well, that we also all with ready mind should most gladly keep whatever the canons of the holy fathers have determined." To whom I forthwith produced the same Book of Canons¹, and from the same book showed before them ten articles which I had marked in different places, because I knew them to be the most necessary for us, and entreated that these might be most particularly received and carried out by all.'

'Article the First. "That we all in common keep the holy day of the Passover on the Lord's Day after the fourteenth moon of the first month."

'Second. "That no bishop shall intrude into the diocese of another, but be content with the rule of the people committed to him."

'Third. "That it shall not be lawful for a bishop to

¹ Probably a collection of the canons of the Church, approved of at the Council of Chalcedon, and translated into Latin, not long before, by Dionysius Exiguus, and received by the Western Church. (Smith.)

disturb in any respect the monasteries consecrated to God, or to take away by violence any part of their property."

'Fourth. "That the monks shall not migrate from place to place, that is, from monastery to monastery, unless by leave¹ of their own abbot, but shall continue in that obedience which they promised at the time of their conversion."

'Fifth. "That no cleric, leaving his own bishop, shall go about here and there as he pleases, or be entertained wherever he comes, without letters of commendation from his own prelate. But if, having been once received, he will not return when requested, both the receiver and the person received shall be under excommunication."

'Sixth. "That bishops and clergy when travelling shall be content with the gift of hospitality showed them, and that it shall not be lawful for any one of them to perform any sacerdotal office without the permission of the bishop in whose diocese he is known to be."

'Seventh. "That a synod shall be assembled twice a year; but because divers causes hinder it, it was determined by all in common, that we should meet once a year, on the Kalends of August, at the place which is called Clofes-hoch²."

'Eighth. "That no bishop shall set himself above another, through ambition; but that all shall observe the time and order of their consecration."

'The Ninth article which was discussed in common was,

¹ per demissionem, for 'dimissionem.' So Bk. III. Chap. xiv., 'demissa intentione,' and Bk. III. Chap. xxii., 'quod factas injurias demitteret.'

² Now Cliff, or Cliffe-at-Hoo, five miles from Rochester.

“ That the number of bishops should be augmented as the number of the faithful increased;” but concerning this point we made no arrangement for the present.

‘ Article the Tenth, with respect to marriages. “ That no wedlock except what is lawful be permitted. That none commit incest; no man leave his own wife, except, as the holy Gospel teaches, on account of fornication. But if any one put away his wife, who has been joined to him by lawful wedlock, if he wishes to be rightly a Christian, let him be joined to no other; but so abide, or be reconciled to his own wife.”

‘ These articles, therefore, having been discussed and defined in common, to the end that no scandal of contention might hereafter arise from any one of us, and that different things should not be promulgated by different persons, it was determined that each one of us, by the subscription of his own hand, should confirm whatever things were determined. Which sentence of our determination I have dictated to be written by Titillus the notary. Done in the month and indiction above-written. Whoever therefore shall attempt in any way to contravene or infringe this sentence, according to the decrees of the canons, confirmed also by our consent and the subscription of our hand, let him know that he is excluded from every sacerdotal office and our society. May the Divine grace keep us safe, living in the unity of its holy Church.’

Moreover, this synod was held in the year from the Lord's incarnation 673, in which year Ecgberct, the king of the Cantuarii, died, in the month of July, and his brother Hlothere succeeded him in the kingdom, which he himself

had held eleven years and seven months¹. Moreover, Bisi², bishop of the East Angles, who is said to have been in the aforesaid synod, was himself the successor of Boniface, of whom I have spoken above, a man of much sanctity and religion. For when Boniface died, after having been bishop seventeen years, he was made bishop in his place, being ordained by Theodore. Whilst he was still living, but prevented by a very severe illness from administering the episcopate, two bishops, Æccī and Baduwine, were elected and consecrated in his place; from which time unto this day that province is wont to have two bishops.

CHAPTER VI.

How, Vynfrid being deposed, Sæxwulf received his episcopate, and Earconwald was made bishop of the East Saxons.

No long time having elapsed after these events, Archbishop Theodore, being offended by Vynfrid, bishop of the Mercians, on account of some disobedience³, deposed him from the episcopate not many years after he had received it, and ordained Sæxwulf bishop, in his place, who was the builder⁴ and abbot of the monastery which is called

¹ For the date of his death, Feb. 6, A.D. 685, see Chap. xxvi.

² Bisi succeeded Boniface A.D. 670. Æcca was made bishop of Domnoco (Dunwich), and Badowine, bishop of Helmham. In A.D. 955, the two sees were united; in A.D. 1075 the see was removed to Thetford, and finally in A.D. 1094, to Norwich. (Giles.)

³ Smith conjectures that he opposed the division of his see.

⁴ By the munificence of the brothers Peada, Wulfhere, and Ædelthred, kings of Mercia, and their sisters Cyneburga and Cyneswitha.

Medeshamsted¹, in the region of the Gyrvi. Vynfrid, then, having been deposed, returned to his monastery, which is called Ad Baruæ, and there ended his life in most holy conversation.

Theodore then also constituted, in the city of London, Earconwald bishop of the East Saxons, over whom, at that time, Sebbi and Sighere reigned, of whom I have spoken above. This man's life and conversation, to wit, in his episcopate and before his episcopate, are reported to have been most holy, as even now the signs of celestial virtues witness. For, indeed, even unto this day, his horse-litter, in which, when infirm, he was wont to be carried, is kept by his disciples, and ceases not to cure many who suffer from fever, or are afflicted with any other ailment. Moreover, not only the sick who are put under or placed near the same litter, are cured, but splints also cut off from it and taken to the sick, are wont to bring them a speedy cure.

Before he was made bishop, he had built two famous monasteries, one for himself, the other for his sister Ædilberga, each of which he had excellently established in the regular discipline. The one for himself, indeed, is in the region of Sudergeona², near the river Thames, in a place that is called Cerotæsei³, that is, the Island of Cerote; but

¹ i.e. 'The place of the dwelling in the meads.' From an abbey dedicated to St. Peter, it was afterwards called Peterborough. After it had been devastated by the Danes, it was restored under the latter name, in A.D. 970, by Æthelwold, bishop of Winchester. *Monast. Angl.* i. 344.

² Suthrigena-land, Saxon Version; Surrey.

³ Now Chertsey, on the Thames. The Chronicle of that abbey states that it was founded A.D. 666, by Earconwald, afterwards bishop of London, with the assistance of Frithwold, 'subregulus' to Wulfhere king of Mercia. It

the one for his sister, in the province of the East Saxons, in the place which is called In Berecingum¹, in which she might be a mother and nurse of women devoted to God. And she, having taken the rule of the monastery, showed herself worthy of her brother the bishop in all respects, both by living rightly herself, and by regularly and piously consulting for those who were subject to her, as also celestial miracles evidenced.

CHAPTER VII.

How in the monastery of Berecingum it was shown by a celestial light where the bodies of the nuns should be buried.

FOR in this monastery also there were more signs of virtues displayed, which are kept by many in writing taken from the account given by those who were acquainted with them, both for their remembrance, and for the edification of posterity; some of which I also have taken care to insert in my Ecclesiastical History. When the storm of the pestilence, so often mentioned, depopulating all parts far and wide, had invaded also that part of this monastery in which the men were contained, and they were one or another daily snatched away to the Lord, the anxious mother of the congregation, at the time when the same plague attacked

was destroyed by the Danes, and afterwards restored by Æthelwold, bishop of Winchester, about A.D. 964. Monast. Angl. i. 422.

¹ Barking in Essex. Founded by Earconwald, bishop of London, in A.D. 677, for a Benedictine nunnery.

also that part of the monastery in which the assemblage of the handmaids of God was kept apart from the company of the men, began frequently to inquire in the convent of the sisters, in what place in the monastery they would wish their bodies to be buried, and a cemetery to be made, when it came to pass that they should be snatched from this world by the same destruction which had befallen the rest. And when she had received no certain answer from the sisters, although she had often asked the question, she herself, together with all, received a most certain response by Divine providence. For, one night, when the handmaids of Christ had finished the psalmodes of matin praise, and had gone forth from the oratory to the sepulchres of the brothers who had gone before them out of this light, and were chanting the accustomed praises to the Lord, behold suddenly, a light sent forth from heaven, as it were a great sheet, came upon them all, and struck them with so great astonishment, that in alarm they even stopped in the chant which they were singing. Moreover, that splendour of light sent forth, in comparison of which the noonday sun would seem dim, not long after being raised from that place, removed towards the south side of the monastery, that is, towards the west of the oratory, and having remained there for some time, and covered those parts, then in the sight of all withdrew itself up to heaven; so that no one could doubt but that the very light which was about to conduct or receive into the heavens the souls of the handmaids of Christ, showed also to their bodies the place in which they were about to rest, and expect the day of resurrection. The radiance of this light was so great, that one of the older

brethren, who at that same hour was with one of the younger brethren in their oratory, related in the morning, that the rays of light entering through the chinks of the doors or windows, appeared to surpass the utmost brightness of daylight.

CHAPTER VIII.

How a little boy, dying in the same monastery, called upon a virgin that was about to follow him; and how another virgin, about to depart from the body, already beheld some small part of the future glory.

THERE was in the same monastery a boy of not more than about three years old, by name Æsica, who, on account of his as yet infantile age, was wont to be nourished in the cell of the virgins dedicated to God, and there to be tended¹. He, being attacked with the aforesaid pestilence, when he was at the point of death, called three times on one of the virgins consecrated to Christ, addressing her by her proper name, as if present, 'Eadgyd, Eadgyd, Eadgyd;' and so ending his temporal life, entered into that which is eternal. But that virgin whom he had called when dying, presently being attacked in the place where she was by the same distemper, on the very day on which she was called, being withdrawn from this light, followed him who called her to the celestial kingdom.

Also, one of the same handmaids of God, being attacked by the aforesaid disease and brought to her last extremity,

¹ medicari. Another reading is 'meditari.'

suddenly began about midnight to call out to those who tended her, desiring that they would extinguish the lamp that had been lighted there; and when she had frequently repeated this request, and yet no one answered or obeyed her, she said at last, 'I know you think that I say this with an unsound mind, but even now understand that it is not so; for I tell you truly that I perceive this house filled with so great a light, that that lamp of yours seems to me altogether dim.' And when even still no one replied to her when she said such things, or complied with her request, she said again, 'Let then that lamp burn as long as you will, but know that it is not my light; for my light is about to come to me when morning commences.' And she began to narrate that a certain man of God, who had died that same year, had appeared to her, and told her that at the coming of dawn she should depart to the eternal light. The truth of which vision was soon proved by the death of the girl at about the break of day.

CHAPTER IX.

The signs which were shown from heaven when the mother herself of that congregation departed from this world.

BUT when Ædilberga herself, the pious mother of the congregation devoted to God, was to be snatched from this world, a wonderful vision appeared to one of the sisters whose name was Torctgyd, who, now for many years having abode in the same monastery, was herself diligent to serve God always in all humility and sincerity, and took care to

be an assistant to the same mother in maintaining the regular discipline, by teaching or correcting the younger ones. And in order that her virtue, according to the apostle, might be made perfect in weakness, she was suddenly attacked with a most severe bodily disease, and was much afflicted for nine years, by the good providence of our Redeemer; forsooth, to the end that whatever befoulment of vice remained in her among her virtues, either through ignorance or negligence, this might all be cleansed away by the furnace of long tribulation. She therefore one night, at the beginning of dawn, having gone forth from the chamber in which she abode, saw plainly as it were a human body, which was brighter than the sun, carried up on high, wrapt in fine linen, being lifted, to wit, from the house in which the sisters were usually placed to die¹. And when she looked more intently to see by what traction this appearance of a glorious body, which she beheld, was raised on high, she saw that it was lifted up into the parts above as it were by cords brighter than gold, until being introduced into the opening heavens, it could no longer be seen by her. And no doubt remained to her, as she considered the vision, but that some one of that congregation was soon about to die, whose soul was to be raised to heaven by the good works which she had done, as it were by golden cords; and this, in fact, so happened. For after an interval of not many days, the beloved of God, the mother of that congregation was led forth from the prison of the flesh, whose life, it is clear, was such that no one who knew her might doubt

¹ *pausare*, i.e. *mori*. Cf. Chap. xxiv. ‘*Erat autem in proximo casa, in qua infirmiores et qui prope morituri esse videbantur, induci solebant.*’

but that the entrance of the celestial country was open to her on her departure from this life.

Also, in the same monastery, there was a certain holy woman, noble in regard to this world's dignity, and more noble by reason of her love of the world to come, who now for many years had been so disabled in every function of her body, that she could not move even a single limb. When she learnt that the body of the venerable abbess was brought into the church previous to its being consigned to sepulture, she requested that she might be brought thither, and inclined towards it, after the manner of those who pray; and when this was done, she asked, as if addressing a living person, that through the pity of the blest Creator, she would obtain release for her from so great and lasting pains. Nor was it very long before she was heard; for after twelve days she also, being led forth from the flesh, exchanged temporal afflictions for an eternal reward.

When the aforesaid handmaid of Christ, Torctgyd, had been detained yet three years in this life after the decease of her lady superior, she was wasted to such an extent by the sickness of which I spoke above, that her bones scarcely held together, and at last, when the time of her dissolution was at hand, she had not only lost the use of her other members, but even of her tongue. And when this had continued for three days and as many nights, being suddenly refreshed by a spiritual vision, she opened her mouth and her eyes, and looking up to heaven, began thus to speak to the vision which she beheld: 'Your coming is very pleasing to me, and you have well come¹;' and when

¹ Et bene venisti, 'you are welcome.' (Giles.)

she had said this, she was silent for a little while, as if expecting an answer from the person whom she saw, and to whom she spoke. And again she added, as though slightly displeased, 'I am quite unable to endure this cheerfully.' And again, having been silent awhile, she said the third time, 'If it can in nowise be to-day, I entreat that the interval may not be long.' She spoke; and as before, after having been silent awhile, thus concluded her utterance: 'If it is absolutely so determined, and this sentence may not be changed, I entreat that it may be deferred no longer than only this next night.' When she had said this, being asked by those who sat round, with whom she spoke, she said, 'With my dearest mother, Ædilberge.' From which they understood that she herself had come to tell her that the time of her departure was at hand. For also just as she requested, one day and night having passed, being freed from the bonds of the flesh and of sickness at the same time, she entered into the joys of eternal salvation.

CHAPTER X.

How a blind woman, praying at the cemetery of the same monastery, recovered her sight.

MOREOVER, a handmaid devoted to God, by name Hildilid, succeeded Ædilburgi in the office of abbess, and for many years, that is, until extreme old age, most strenuously presided over the same monastery, both in the observance of regular discipline, and in carefulness respecting those

things which pertain to common uses. And when she had determined, on account of the narrowness of the place in which the monastery was built, that the bones of the servants and handmaids of Christ who had been buried there, should be taken up, and should all be transferred to the church of the blessed mother of God, and should be interred in one place,—how often a brightness of celestial light appeared, how great a fragrance of marvellous odour was often perceived there, and what other wonders were shown, whoever reads will find in that same book from which I have extracted these things.

I think, however, that I ought by no means to pass over a miracle of healing which the same book relates was wrought at that cemetery of the congregation dedicated to God. There was, forsooth, in the neighbourhood a certain earl, whose wife, a sudden darkness coming upon her eyes, was so much afflicted by the daily increase of the same ailment, that she could not see even the least particle of any light. And when she had continued for a long time shrouded in the night of this blindness, it came suddenly into her mind that if she were brought to the monastery of the holy virgins, and made her request at the relics of the saints, she might recover her lost sight. Nor did she defer accomplishing forthwith what she had thought of; for having been led by her maidens to the monastery, which was close at hand, when she had professed her entire faith that she should be cured, she was conducted to the cemetery, and having there prayed for a long time on her bended knees, she gained a speedy hearing; for on her rising up from prayer, before she went forth from the

place, she received the gift of sight which she requested. And she who had been led thither by the hands of her maidens, joyfully returned home by herself, with the free movement of her feet; as though she had lost temporal light for this reason alone, that she might demonstrate by her cure how great a light, and what grace of virtue, belongs to the saints of Christ in heaven.

CHAPTER XI.

How Sebbi, king of the same province, ended his life as a monk.

AT that time, as the same book also informs us, a man much devoted to God, by name Sebbi, of whom I have above made mention¹, ruled over the kingdom of the East Saxons. He was much given to religious actions, frequent prayers, and pious fruits of alms; preferring a private and monastic life to all the riches and honours of his kingdom; which life he would even already long before have entered upon, and left his kingdom, had not the determined mind of his wife refused a divorce. Whence it seemed to many, and was often said, that it became a man of such a mind to be made a bishop rather than a king. And when he had passed thirty years² in reigning as a soldier of the heavenly kingdom, he was suddenly seized with a very great bodily

¹ Bk. III. Chap. xxx.

² Sebbi succeeded A.D. 665, and died A.D. 694. Stowe and Weever speak of his tomb as remaining to their days in St. Paul's. It was destroyed in the Great Fire of 1666.

infirmity, of which he also died; and he admonished his wife that they both should then, at least, devote themselves to the service of God, when they could no longer together enjoy, or rather serve, the world. When he had with difficulty obtained this of her, he went to the bishop of the city of London, by name Waldhere¹, who had succeeded Erconwald², and with his benediction received the religious habit, which he had long desired. Moreover, he brought to the same bishop a considerable sum of money to be dispensed to the poor, reserving nothing at all for himself, but longing more to remain poor in spirit for the sake of the kingdom of heaven.

And when, the aforesaid malady increasing, he perceived the day of his death to be at hand, being a man of a royal mind, he began to fear lest on coming to die and being afflicted with so great pain, he might either utter with his mouth, or express by the motion of other of his members, anything unworthy of his person. Wherefore, having summoned to him the aforesaid bishop of the city of London, where he was then abiding, he requested that none should be present at his death besides the bishop himself and two of his attendants. Which when the bishop most willingly promised that he would undertake, the same man of God not long after, when he had composed himself to sleep, saw a consolatory vision, which removed from him all the

¹ William of Malmesbury says of all the bishops of London from Erconwald to Theodred the nineteenth bishop: 'Adeo sub obscuritatis nubilo jacent, ut non eorum sciantur mausolea.' *Gest. Pont.* ii. p. 236.

² In spite of the opposition of the brethren of Barking and Chertsey, the body of Erconwald was buried in St. Paul's. His relics were taken up and placed in a coffer to be worshipped, A.D. 1148.

anxiety of the aforesaid solicitude, and moreover showed him on what day he was to terminate this life. For he saw, as he himself afterwards related, three men clothed in shining raiment come to him; one of whom, sitting down before his bed, said to his companions who had come with him, and who stood and asked concerning the state of him whom they had come to visit in his sickness, that his soul was about to depart from the body without any pain, and with a great splendour of light; and moreover declared, that the third day thereafter was the one on which he should die. Each of which things was fulfilled, just as he was informed by the vision. For on the third day after, at the end of the ninth hour, he suddenly, as if gently falling asleep, without any feeling of pain, gave up the ghost.

They had prepared a stone sarcophagus to bury his body in, but when they had begun to put his body into this, they found it a span longer than the sarcophagus. Thereupon they chipped away as much of the stone as they could, and added about the measure of two fingers' breadth to the length of the sarcophagus. But not even so did it take the body. Whence a difficulty having arisen of burying him, they were thinking either to procure another coffin, or to contract the body itself, if they could, by bending it at the knees, until it could be contained in the same coffin. But a wonderful thing, wrought by heaven alone, prevented the need of any of these things being done. For suddenly, while the bishop was standing by, and Sighard, the son of the same king and monk, after whom he reigned, together with his brother Suefred, and no small assemblage of men, that sarcophagus was found to be of length suited to the

measure of the body, so that a pillow could even be put in at the head; and at the foot the sarcophagus extended four fingers' measure beyond the body. Moreover, he was buried in the church of the blessed teacher of the Gentiles, instructed by whose admonitions he had learned to hope for heavenly things.

CHAPTER XII.

How Hæddi, in the place of Leutherius, received the episcopate of the West Saxons; Cuichelm, in the place of Putta, the episcopate of the Church of Rochester, and in his place, Gefmund; and who were at that time bishops of the Northumbrians.

THE fourth¹ prelate of the West Saxons was Leutherius; for Birinus was the first, Agilberct the second, and Vini the third. When Coinwalch was dead, in whose reign the same Leutherius was made bishop, the petty princes² took the government of the nation, and, dividing it among themselves, held it for about ten years; and during their government he died, and Hæddi discharged the duties of the episcopate in his place, having been consecrated by Theodore in the city of London. In the time of whose episcopate,

¹ See Bk. III. Chap. vii. Hæddi succeeded Leutherius A.D. 676. Hæddi died A.D. 705.

² Æscwin and Kentwin. William of Malmesbury, however, says that Sexburga, the wife of Coinwalch, governed the province for one year after his death, when she died, A.D. 674, and Æscwin succeeded, who died A.D. 676, when Kentwin, the son of Cynegils, and brother of Cenwall (Coinwalch) succeeded. On his death in A.D. 685, Cædwall, the son of Cenbyrht, succeeded.

Cædwalla, having conquered and removed the petty princes, received the sovereign power, and when he had held it two years, being at length penetrated with love of the heavenly kingdom, he left it, the same prelate still governing the Church, and departing to Rome, ended his life there, as in the sequel I must more fully relate.

Moreover, in the year of the Lord's incarnation 676, when Ædilred¹, king of the Mercians, having brought a hostile army, ravaged Kent, and profaned the churches and monasteries without regard to piety or the fear of God; he also destroyed in the common devastation the city of Rochester, of which Putta was bishop, although at that time absent. Putta being informed of this, to wit, that his church was ravaged and that all things had been taken away, betook himself to Sexwulf, the prelate of the Mercians, and having received of him possession of a certain church and a small plot of land, there ended his life in peace, doing nothing at all in regard to the restoration of his bishopric; because, as I before said, he was more zealous in ecclesiastical than in worldly affairs, but serving God in that church only, and going wherever he was requested to teach church-singing. Theodore consecrated Cuichelm bishop of the city of Rochester in his place. But he departing from the bishopric not long after, owing to his want of means, and retiring to other parts, Theodore substituted Gebmund as bishop in his place.

¹ Ædilred was the brother of Wulfhere, and succeeded on his death A.D. 675. Saxon Chronicle and Florence. At this time, the Westhanhecani, or people of Herefordshire, in the western part of Mercia, were under the government of Merewald, Ædilred's brother.

In the year of the Lord's incarnation 678, which is the eighth year of the reign of King Ecgfrid, there appeared in the month of August a star, which is called a comet, and continuing for three months, rose in the morning hours, having before it as it were a high column of radiant flame. In which year also, on a dispute arising between the said King Ecgfrid and the most reverend prelate Wilfrid, the same prelate was driven from his episcopal see¹, and two bishops were substituted in his place, to preside over the nation of the Northumbrians, to wit, Bosa, to govern the province of the Deiri, and Eata that of the Bernicii; the former having his episcopal see in the city of York, the latter² in the church of Hagustald, or Lindisfarne, both promoted to the degree of the episcopate from a college of monks. Together with them Eadhæd³ also is ordained bishop in the province of the Lindisfari, which King Ecgfrid had very recently gained possession of, having overcome in war and put to flight Wulfhere. He was the first bishop that the same province had of its own, the second was Ædilwin, the third Eadgar, the fourth Cyniberct, whom it has at

¹ Hædde says that Queen Ermenburga's ill-will was the cause of Wilfrid's being deprived of his see. Simeon of Durham says that Archbishop Theodore deposed him at the requisition of Ecgfrid. Eadmer states that the whole proceeding was by the sole will and authority of the archbishop.

² 'Hic' is here used to express the former, and 'ille' the latter, contrary to Latin usage.

³ See Bk. III. Chap. xxviii. Eadhæd was driven from his see A.D. 678. In A.D. 679, Ædilred and Archbishop Theodore divided Sexwulf's diocese of Mercia into five bishoprics, the sees of which were Lyccidfelth, Leogera of the Midland Angles (Leicester), Sidena of Lindsey, Dorcestre of the South Angles, Vigorna of the Huiccii. Florence says, 'quibus sextam adjecit,' which Hussey supposes to be Hecana or Hereford.

present. For before Eadhæd, it had Sexwulf for its prelate, who was also bishop of the Mercians, as well as of the Midland Angles; whence, also, being expelled from Lindsey, he continued in the government of those provinces. Moreover, Eadhæd, Bosa, and Eata, were ordained at York by Archbishop Theodore, who also, three years after the withdrawal of Wilfrid, added two prelates to their number, Tunberct for the church of Hagustald, Eata continuing in that of Lindisfarne, and Trumwine for the province of the Picts, which at that time was subject to the dominion of the Angles¹. He set Eadhæd, who returned from Lindsey because Ædilred had recovered the province, over the church of Ripon.

CHAPTER XIII.

How Bishop Wilfrid converted to Christ the province of the South Saxons.

MOREOVER, Wilfrid was driven from his bishopric, and, having wandered through many places for a long time, came to Rome. Afterwards he returned to Britain, and although, on account of the enmity of the aforesaid king, he could not be received into his own country or diocese, yet he could not be restrained from the ministry of preaching the Gospel: for turning aside to the province of the South Saxons², which extends from the Cantuarii towards the

¹ Oswy subdued it, Bk. III. Chap. xxiv. It was recovered by the Picts A.D. 685. Chap. xxvi.

² Hædde, Vit. Vilfr. 13, says that Wilfrid, in A.D. 664, was driven on the coast of the South Saxons, and, being attacked by them, lost five of his men,

south and towards the west, even to the West Saxons, having a territory of seven thousand families, and which at that time was still serving pagan forms of worship, he ministered to it the word of faith and the laver of salvation. Moreover, the king of that nation was Ædilwalch, who was baptized not long before¹, in the province of the Mercians, at the persuasion of King Wulfhere, who was present, by whom also, when he had come forth from the font, he was received as his son; in token of which adoption, he gave him two provinces, to wit the island of Vecta, and the province of the Meanvari² in the nation of the West Saxons. The bishop, then, with the king's consent, or rather to his great delight, washed in the sacred fountain the principal chiefs and soldiers of the province; but the presbyters, Eappa and Padra, and Burghelm, and Oiddi, baptized the rest of the people, either then or afterwards. Further, the queen, by name Eabæ, had been baptized in her own province, that is, in that of the Huiccii³. She was, moreover, the daughter of Eanfrid, the brother of Eanhere, both of whom, together with their people, were Christians. But the whole of the province of the South Saxons was ignorant of the Divine name and faith.

before his ship got off with the rising tide. But concerning Wilfrid's betaking himself to the South Saxons in A.D. 681, Hædde (40) says that, having been prevented by Ecgrid from obtaining a see either in Mercia or among the West Saxons, he went to the province of the South Saxons, 'quæ pro rupium multitudine et silvarum densitate aliis provinciis inexpugnabilis exstitit.'

¹ A.D. 661. Saxon Chronicle.

² Three of the hundreds of Hampshire retain the name of this province, i.e. 'Mean;' 'fari' or 'vara' being a common termination to signify the inhabitants of a district. They are Meon-stoke, Eastmeon, and Westmeon.

³ Cf. Chap. xxiii.

Moreover, there was there a certain monk of the nation of the Scots, by name Dicul¹, who had a very small monastery in the place which is called Bosanhamm², surrounded by woods and by the sea, and in it five or six brethren serving the Lord in humility and poverty; but none of the people of the province cared either to emulate their life or hear their preaching.

But Bishop Wilfrid, by preaching the Gospel to this nation, not only rescued it from the pain of eternal damnation, but also from a dreadful calamity of temporal destruction; since for three years before his coming into the province no rain had fallen in those parts, whereupon a most severe famine attacked the common people, and overthrew them with a wretched death. In short, they relate that often forty or fifty men, worn out with want of food, would go together to some precipice or sea-beach, and having pitiably joined hands, would together all cast themselves down, either to perish by the fall, or be swallowed up by the waves. But on the very day on which that nation received the baptism of the faith, a soft but copious rain fell; the earth flourished anew, and, the fields growing green, the year became glad and fruitful; and so their old superstition being renounced and idolatry exploded, the heart and flesh of all rejoiced in the living God, since they understood that He who is the true God had enriched them by heavenly bounty with both inward and outward good things. For the bishop, also, when he had come into the province, and had there seen

¹ A priest, and companion of Furseus. Bk. III. Chap. xix.

² Boseham. From this monastery and that of Selsey arose the bishopric of Chichester.

so great a judgment of famine, taught them to get subsistence by fishing. For their sea and rivers abounded in fish, but the people had no knowledge of fishing, except for eels only. The bishop's men, therefore, having collected eel-nets from every quarter, cast them into the sea, and presently, by the aid of Divine goodness, took three hundred fishes of different sorts, which having divided into three parts, they gave a hundred to the poor, a hundred to those of whom they had obtained the nets, and kept a hundred for their own use. By which benefit the prelate greatly turned the hearts of all to the love of him; and they began more readily to hope for heavenly things at the preaching of him by whose assistance they had received temporal good things.

At which time, King Ædilwalch gave the most reverend prelate Wilfrid an estate of eighty-seven families, where he might receive his people who were wandering in exile, by name Selæseu, which is called in Latin, *Insula Vituli Marini*. For that place is encompassed by the sea on all sides, except at the west, where it has a way of access about a sling's cast in width, which kind of place is wont to be called by the Latins a peninsula, by the Greeks, a chersonesus. When, then, Bishop Wilfrid had received this place, he founded there a monastery¹, and established it with a course of regular life, mostly of those brethren whom he had brought thither with him; which monastery his successors, as is well known, hold unto this day. For he himself, being deservedly honoured by all, discharged, in those parts, the duties of the episcopate, both in word and deed, for five

¹ Eappa, one of the four priests mentioned in this chapter, was set over it. Cf. Chap. xiv.

years, that is, until the death of King Ecgfrid¹. And whereas the king gave him, together with the possession of the aforesaid place, all the goods that were there, together with the fields and men, he washed all the people with the water of baptism, when they had been instructed in the faith of Christ. Among whom were 250 men and women serfs, all of whom, as he had rescued them from the servitude of demons, by baptizing them, so also he freed from the yoke of human servitude, by giving them their liberty.

CHAPTER XIV.²

How, at the intercession of King Oswald, a pestilential mortality was removed.

IN which monastery, at that time, some gifts of celestial grace are said to have been specially manifested, as in a place where, the tyranny of the devil having been lately expelled, Christ had now begun to reign; and one of these, which the most reverend prelate Acca was wont often to relate to me, and to assert that it was told him by most creditable brethren of the same monastery, I have thought fit to commit to remembrance. At about the same time at which that province received the name of Christ, a

¹ This took place May 21, A.D. 685. Chap. xxvi. Wilfrid was restored in the second year of Ecgfrid's successor, Aldfrid. See Bk. V. Chap. xix.

² The MSS. differ greatly here in the numbering of the chapters. The titles of this and the next chapter are not in the index of the Moore MS., although this chapter is in it, and in one of the two Cottonian MSS. In the other of the two it is omitted, and this marginal note in very old handwriting is added, 'hic folium deest.' (Smith.)

grievous mortality seized on many provinces of Britain, and when it reached, by the appointment of the Divine dispensation, even the aforesaid monastery, which was then governed by a most religious priest of Christ, by name Eappa; and many of those who had come with that prelate, as well as of those of the same province of the Saxons, who had been lately called to the faith, were constantly being snatched away from this life; the brethren thought fit to observe a fast of three days, and suppliantly to beseech the Divine clemency to deign to bestow pity on them, either by freeing those from present death who were in danger through this disease, or else by preserving from eternal damnation of the soul those who were snatched away from this world.

There was at that time in the same monastery a little boy, of the nation of the Saxons, lately called to the faith, who, being attacked by the same distemper, lay for a long time reclining on his bed. On the second day, then, of the aforesaid fast and supplications, it happened by chance that the same boy, at about the second hour of the day, was left alone in the place in which he lay sick; and, by the Divine dispensation, the blessed chiefs of the apostles deigned suddenly to appear to him. For he was a boy of a very simple and meek disposition, and kept with sincere devotion the mysteries of the faith which he had received. Therefore the apostles said, saluting him with most kindly words, 'Fear not, O son, death, about which you are troubled, for we will this day conduct you to the celestial kingdom. But first you have to wait¹ until the masses are celebrated; and

¹ expectare habes.

when you have received the viaticum of the Lord's body and blood, being thus freed at the same time from sickness and from death, you shall be taken up to eternal joys in heaven. Call therefore to you the presbyter Eappa, and say to him, that the Lord has heard your prayers and has propitiously beheld your devotion and fastings, and that not one more of this monastery, or of the tenements adjacent to it, will die of this pestilence ; but that all of you who are anywhere labouring under this sickness, will arise from their languor and be restored to their former health ; except you alone, who are to be liberated by death this day, and conducted to heaven, to the sight of the Lord Christ, whom you have faithfully served ; this the Divine pity has deigned to grant you, through the intercession of the religious king Oswald, the beloved by God, who formerly sublimely ruled over the nation of the Northumbrians, both with the authority of a temporal government, and with that devotion of Christian piety which leads to the eternal kingdom. For as on this day the same king, being bodily destroyed by the infidels in war, was presently received up to heaven, to the everlasting joys of souls, and associated with the bands of the elect. Let them search in their books, in which the burial¹ is registered of the departed, and they will find that he was snatched away from this world, as we have said, on this day. Let them therefore celebrate masses in all the oratories of this monastery, whether in thanksgiving for their prayer being heard, or also for remembrance of

¹ depositio, i.e. 'sepultura.' Inscr. apud Fea. Framm. conso!. p. 89.
'Depositio ejus die iii nonas Oct. Nepotiano et Facundo cons. in pace.'
Facc. Lex.

the aforesaid King Oswald, who formerly ruled over their nation, and therefore made supplication by prayer to the Lord for them as for the naturalized ¹ people of his nation. And let all the brethren meeting together in the church, communicate in the heavenly sacrifice, and then ceasing from their fast, let them refresh their bodies with their usual food.'

All which words when the boy had related to the presbyter whom he had called to him, the presbyter particularly enquired of him what sort of men those who had appeared to him were, in garb and aspect. He answered, 'In garb and countenance, they were altogether bright and shining, most joyous and beautiful, such as I had never seen before; nor did I think that there could be any men of such comeliness and beauty. One indeed was shorn as a cleric, the other had a long beard; and they said that one of them was called Peter, the other Paul; and that they were the servants of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, sent by Him from heaven for the safeguard of our monastery.' The presbyter therefore believed the boy's words, and immediately going out, searched in his register, and found that King Oswald was slain on that very day; and having called together the brethren, he ordered dinner to be got ready, masses to be performed, and that all should communicate as usual, and also commanded that a portion of the same sacrifice of the Lord's oblation should be carried to the sick boy.

Which being done, not long after, on the selfsame day, the boy died, and by his death proved that the words were

¹ advenis.

true which he had heard from the apostles of Christ. Further, this circumstance also afforded testimony to the truth of his words, that no one belonging to the same monastery, except himself, was snatched away, at that time, from this world. By which vision, forsooth, many who could hear these things, were wonderfully excited to implore the Divine clemency in adversity, and to have recourse to the salutary remedies of fasts ; and from that time, not only in the same monastery, but also in very many other places, the birthday of the same king and soldier of Christ began to be honoured yearly by the celebration of masses.

CHAPTER XV.

How King Cædwalla, having slain Ædilwalch¹ the king of the Gevissi², wasted that province with cruel slaughter and devastation.

IN the meantime, Cædwalla³, a most enterprising young man, of the royal race of the Gevissi, who had been living in exile from his country, coming with an army, slew King Ædilwalch, and wasted that province with cruel slaughter and devastation, but presently was expelled by the king's generals, Bercthun and Andhun, who afterwards held the

¹ Florence calls this king Æthelwald.

² This should be South Saxons. See Chap. xiii.

³ Cædwalla, whose mother was probably of Welsh or British descent, was the son of Cynberct, the son of Cada, the son of Cuthwin or Cutha, the son of Ceaulin. Cuthwin had two other sons, Ceolwald, the grandfather of Ina, and Cynebald, the grandfather of Oswald surnamed Clito.

government of the province ; the former of whom was afterwards¹ killed by the same Cædwalla, when he was king of the Gevissi, and the province was brought under a more grievous slavery. Ini, also, who reigned after Cædwalla, kept that province under a like servitude for very many years². Whence it came to pass, that during the whole of that time they could not have a bishop of their own ; but Wilfrid, their first prelate, having been recalled home, they were subject to the bishop of the Gevissi, that is, of the West Saxons who were in the city of Venta³.

CHAPTER XVI.⁴

How the island of Vecta received Christian inhabitants ; and how its two young princes were killed immediately after they had received baptism.

AFTER Cædwalla obtained the kingdom of the Gevissi, he took also the island of Vecta, which up to that time had been

¹ Cædwalla and his brother Moll or Mûl (mule, or half-breed), ravaged Kent and the Isle of Wight, A.D. 686. The following year, Moll with twelve others was burnt by the Kentish people. Gul. Malm. in Gale, Script. i. p. 310. Cædwalla revenged his death the same year by a fresh invasion of Kent. Saxon Chronicle.

² Until A.D. 694, when the people of Kent made peace with Ina, to whom they gave up thirty men. Saxon Chronicle.

³ Hæddi was bishop of Winchester from A.D. 676 to 703. Saxon Chronicle. The churches of Sussex were under the bishop of Winchester until A.D. 711. See Bk. V. Chap. xviii.

⁴ In the Moore MS. and in the second Cottonian, this and the last chapter are a continuation of Chapter xiv., to which the title of this is affixed.

entirely given up to idolatry; he next proceeded to exterminate all the natives with tragic slaughter, and to substitute in their place men of his own province, binding himself by a vow, although, as they relate, he was not as yet regenerated in Christ, that if he took the island, he would give to the Lord the fourth part of it, and also of the spoil. Which he performed by giving this part, to be employed for the Lord, to Bishop Wilfrid, who was then by chance present, having come unexpectedly from his own nation. Now, the measure of the same island, according to the estimate of the Angles, is of twelve hundred families; wherefore, a possession of land of three hundred families was given to the bishop. But he gave over the part which he himself received to one of his clergy, whose name was Bernwin, and who was his sister's son, assigning to him a presbyter, by name Hiddila, who should minister to all who would be saved the word and laver of life.

Here I think that I must not pass over in silence that, among the firstfruits of those of the same island who were saved by believing, two boys of the blood royal, brothers, to wit, the sons of Arwald, king of the island, were crowned with the special grace of God; for when the enemy approached the island, they escaped by flight from the island, and were conveyed across to the neighbouring province of the Jutes¹, where, having been brought to a place which is called Ad Lapidem², when they thought that they would be concealed from the face of the victorious king,

¹ 'Eota land,' 'the land of the Eotens, or giants.' Saxon Version.

² Probably, Stoneham, between Southampton and Winchester, on the Itchen.

they were betrayed, and ordered to be killed. Which when a certain abbot and presbyter, by name Cyniberct, had heard, who had a monastery not far from thence, at a place which is called Hreutford¹, that is, Reed-Ford, he came to the king, who living then in privacy in those parts, was being healed of the wounds that were inflicted on him when fighting in the island of Vecta, and begged of him that if it were inevitable that the boys should be put to death, they might be allowed first to be made acquainted with the sacraments of the Christian faith. The king granted his request, and Cyniberct himself, having instructed them in the word of truth, and washed them in the font of salvation, assured them of entrance into the eternal kingdom. And presently, when the executioner came, they gladly underwent temporal death, by which they did not doubt that they should pass to the eternal life of the soul. In this order, then, after all the provinces of Britain had received the faith of Christ, the island of Vecta also received it; in which, however, on account of the affliction of foreign subjection, no one received the grade of the episcopal ministry and see, before Danihel, who is now bishop of the West Saxons.

Now, this island is situate over against the boundary of the South Saxons and Gevissi, having the sea between three miles in width, which is called Solvente²; in which sea, to wit, the two tides of the ocean, which daily flow forth around Britain from the immense northern ocean, meet and battle with one another, beyond the mouth of the river

¹ Now Redbridge. 'Hreodford,' Saxon Version.

² 'Solente,' Saxon Version.

Homelea¹, that through the territory of the Jutes, which borders on the region of the Gevissi, enters the aforesaid sea; and having ended their conflict, they flow back and return to the ocean from which they came.

CHAPTER XVII.

Concerning the synod held in the plain of Hæthfeld, Archbishop Theodore being president.

AT this time, Theodore, hearing that the faith of the Church at Constantinople had been much disturbed by the heresy of Eutyches², and being desirous that the Churches of the Angles, over which he ruled, should abide free from such a stain, having collected an assemblage of venerable priests and very many doctors, diligently enquired what belief they each held, and found an unanimous agreement of all in the Catholic faith; and this he took care to commit to a synodal letter, for the instruction and remembrance of posterity; of which letter, to wit, this is the beginning:—

¹ The Hamble.

² The heresy of Eutyches was the Monophysite, which asserted that Christ had but one nature, as He was one person. This was condemned at the *first* general council, at Chalcedon, A.D. 451. From this heresy sprung the *with* Monothelite, which asserted that Christ, although having two natures, had but one will, the Divine. This was condemned at the sixth general council, at Constantinople, A.D. 681. Pope Agatho held a council at Rome A.D. 480, for the purpose of sending a deputation to Constantinople to declare the belief of the Western Church. Before this council the metropolitans of the West, in their several provinces, held synods, the proceedings of which were to be reported at Rome. The synod of Hæthfeld was one of these. Wilfrid was present at the council at Rome.

‘In the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in the reign of our most pious lords, Ecgfrid, king of the Hymbrenenses, in the tenth year of his reign¹, on the fifteenth day before the Kalends of October, in the eighth indiction; and Ædilred, king of the Mercinenses, in the sixth year of his reign; and Aldwulf, king of the Estrangli, in the seventeenth year of his reign; and Hlotharius, king of the Cantuarii, in the seventh year of his reign; Theodore being president, by the grace of God archbishop of the island of Britain and of the city of Canterbury, and other venerable men, bishops of the island of Britain, sitting with him, with the holy Gospels laid before them, in the place which is called by the Saxon name of Haethfelth²; we handling the subject in concert, have made an exposition of the right and orthodox faith, even as our incarnate Lord Jesus Christ delivered it to His disciples who saw Him present, and heard His discourses, and as the creed of the holy fathers has delivered, and generally all the holy and universal synods, and all the assembly of approved doctors of the Catholic Church. We, therefore, piously and orthodoxly following them, and making our profession according to their Divinely-inspired teaching, believe in unison with it, and confess, according to the holy fathers, that the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, are properly and truly a consubstantial Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity; that is, one God in

¹ The tenth year of Ecgfrid lasted from Feb. 15, A.D. 679, to the same day of A.D. 680. There would be no difficulty in fixing the date of the Council as Sept. 17, 679, but that Bede also dates it ‘indictione octava,’ which is certainly A.D. 680. Bede reckoned the indiction from Sept. 24.

² Bishop’s Hatfield, in Hertfordshire.

three consubstantial subsistencies¹, or persons of equal glory and honour.' And after many things of this kind that pertained to the confession of the right faith, the holy synod also adds this to its letter :—' We have received as holy and universal, five synods of the fathers, blessed and acceptable to God, that is, of the three hundred and eighteen who were assembled at Nicæa, against the most impious Arius and the tenets of the same ; and of one hundred and fifty at Constantinople, against the madness of Macedonius and Eudoxius, and their dogmas ; and of two hundred in the first council at Ephesus, against the most wicked Nestorius, and the dogmas of the same ; and of six hundred and thirty at Chalcedon against Eutyches and Nestorius, and their dogmas ; and again of those who were assembled in a fifth council, at Constantinople, in the time of the younger Justinian, against Theodore and the epistles of Theodoret and Ibas, and their dogmas, against Cyril.' And a little after : ' Also we have received the synod² that was held in the city of Rome, in the time of the blessed pope Martin, in the eighth indiction, in the ninth year of the reign of the most pious Constantine³. And we glorify our Lord Jesus Christ as they glorified Him, neither adding nor subtracting anything ; and we anathematize with heart and mouth those

¹ subsistentiis = ὑποστάσεις.

² That which was held on the same subject by Pope Martin, Oct. 5, A.D. 649. 'Synodum' is here used like *συνοδικόν*, 'synodicum' (decretum). See Chap. xviii., and Bk. V. Chap. xix.

³ It should be 'Constans,' the son of Constantine, the son of Heraclius, and the father of Constantine Pogonatus. In his ninth year, i.e. A.D. 649, this synod was held at Rome. The same mistake occurs in the *Acta Conciliorum*, vide. Mansi, x. p. 863. (Hussey.)

whom they anathematized; and those whom they received we receive; glorifying God the Father without beginning, and His only-begotten Son, begotten of the Father before the world began, and the Holy Spirit proceeding ineffably from the Father and the Son, as those holy apostles and prophets and doctors have declared of whom we have spoken above. And all we, who with Theodore the archbishop have made an exposition of the Catholic faith, have subscribed hereto.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Concerning John, the chanter of the apostolic see, who came to Britain to teach.

AMONG those who were present at this synod, and together confirmed¹ the decrees of the Catholic faith, was John, a venerable man, precentor² of the holy church of the apostle Peter, and abbot of the monastery of St. Martin, who had lately come from Rome by the command of Pope Agatho, under the conduct of the most reverend abbot Biscop, surnamed Benedict, of whom I have spoken above³. For when the same Benedict had built a monastery in Britain in honour of the most blessed chief of the apostles, near the

¹ As being Pope Agatho's legate. Both priests and deacons had the right of sitting in the Anglo-Saxons' synods, but the bishops only were allowed to vote.

² archicantor.

³ This is the first mention of Biscop Benedict in Bede's Church History. In saying that he has spoken of him above, he apparently refers to his *Historia Abbatum*, which in his own catalogue immediately precedes the Church History. Benedict is called by Hædde Biscop Baducius, Vit. Vilfr. 3.

mouth of the river Viuri¹, he went to Rome, where he had often been before, with Ceolfrid, his co-operator and partner in the same work, who after him was abbot of the same monastery, and was honourably entertained by Pope Agatho of blessed memory; of whom he requested and obtained, for the defence of the liberty of the monastery which he had built, a letter of privilege, confirmed by apostolical authority, according to what he knew King Ecgfrid to have wished, and to have given licence for; by whose consent, and grant of the possession of the land, he had built the same monastery.

He received also the aforesaid abbot John, to be conducted to Britain, in order that he might teach in his monastery the course of singing throughout the year, as it was done at St. Peter's at Rome; and the abbot John did as he had received command of the pontiff, to wit, by teaching the singers of the aforesaid monastery the order and manner of singing and reading aloud, and those things which the circle of the whole year required in the celebration of festival days; even by committing them to writing; which to the present time are kept in the same monastery, and have been already transcribed by many of various places. Moreover, not only did the same John teach the brothers of that monastery, but from almost all the monasteries of the same province those who were skilled in chanting flocked together to hear him. Besides, many took care to invite him to teach in various places.

Moreover, besides the office of chanting or reading, he had received also another commission from the apo-

¹ The Wear.

stolic pope, in his mandates, that he should diligently learn what belief the Church of the Angles held, and should bring word on his return to Rome. For when he came he also brought with him the decision of the synod of the blessed Pope Martin, held at Rome not long before, by the consent of one hundred and five bishops, chiefly against those who asserted one operation and will in Christ; and lent it to be transcribed in the aforesaid monastery of the most religious abbot Benedict. For such persons at that time greatly disturbed the faith of the Church at Constantinople; but, by the Lord's gift, were then already detected and subdued. Whence Pope Agatho, wishing to know, as in the other provinces, so also in Britain, what the state of the Church was, and to what extent it was clear from the contagion of heretics, enjoined this business on the most reverend abbot John, when he was appointed to go to Britain. The council, therefore, of which I have spoken, having been assembled for this purpose in Britain, the Catholic faith was found inviolate among all, and a report of it was given him to take to Rome.

But on his return to his country, not long after he crossed the ocean, he was seized with illness and died, and his body was brought by his friends to Tours, on account of his love of St. Martin, over whose monastery he had presided, and was honourably interred. For he was received with kind hospitality by that Church when he went to Britain, and was much entreated by the brethren that, on his return from Rome, he would come that way, and visit their Church. In short, he received in the same place persons to help him on his way, and to assist him in the

work enjoined on him; and although he died on the way, nevertheless a report of the Catholic faith of the Angles was brought to Rome, and received with the greatest pleasure by the apostolic pope, and all who heard or read it.

CHAPTER XIX.

How Queen Ædilhryd remained always a virgin, and how her body could not suffer corruption in the tomb.

MOREOVER, King Ecgfrid took a wife of the name of Ædilhryd, the daughter of Anna, king of the East Angles, of whom I have often made mention, a man truly religious and altogether excellent in mind and in deed. She had been the wife of another man before him—to wit, the chief of the Southern Gyrvi, by name Tondberct. But on his death a short time after he received her, she was given to the aforesaid king, with whom she lived twelve years, yet she remained glorious in the perpetual integrity of her virginity, as, on my enquiring, when certain persons doubted whether this were so, Bishop Wilfrid, of blessed memory, informed me, saying that he was a most sure witness of her integrity, inasmuch as Ecgfrid had promised to give him much land and money if he could persuade the queen to allow him his conjugal rights, because he knew that she loved no man more than him. Nor is it to be distrusted that the same could take place even in our age, which in preceding ages faithful histories relate to have sometimes happened, by the gift of one and the same Lord, who promises to abide with us unto the end of the world. For, besides, the sign of a

Divine miracle by which the flesh of the same woman, when buried, could not suffer corruption, is a proof that she continued uncontaminated by the contact of man.

For a long time she had greatly entreated the king that she might be permitted to leave the cares of the world, and, in a monastery, serve Christ alone, the true King; and when she had with difficulty at last obtained her request, she entered the monastery of the abbess *Æbba*¹, who was the paternal aunt of King *Ecgfrid*, which was situated in the place which they call the City of *Colud*², having received the veil of the saintly habit from the aforesaid prelate *Wilfrid*. But after a year she was herself made abbess in the region which is called *Elge*³, where having built a monastery, she began to be, both by example and by ad-

¹ *Æbba* was the daughter of *Ædilfrid*, the sister of *Oswy* and *Oswald*, and the paternal aunt of *Ecgfrid*. Before she went to *Coldingham*, she dwelt at a place on the *Derwent*, called after her *Ebchester*. She was a friend of *St. Cuthbert*, *Vit. Cudb.* 10, and died A.D. 684. There was another abbess of *Coldingham* of the same name, A.D. 870, who cut off her own nose and lips, and induced the sisters to do the same, in order to escape violence from the Danes.

² Now *Coldingham*, in *Berwickshire*, near *Berwick*. *Eadgar*, king of *Scotland*, gave it to the monastery of *Durham*, on account of his reverence for *St. Cuthbert*. The promontory near *Coldingham* is, in memory of *St. Æbba*, called *St. Abb's Head*.

³ *Thomas of Ely*, *Anglia Sacra*, i. 595, says that she fled from *Coldingham* to *Ely* to avoid her husband's attempts to bring her back to the conjugal state. This took place, according to *Bede*, A.D. 672; but *Florence*, and others, date it A.D. 673. She was canonized under the name of *St. Audry*, and in the *Roman Martyrology* June 23 is assigned to her memory. *Ædilthyde* began to build the monastery A.D. 673. *Saxon Chronicle*. It was burnt by the Danes, A.D. 870, but rebuilt and filled with monks by *Ædilwold*, bishop of *Winchester*, in A.D. 970. *Henry I.* made it a bishop's see in A.D. 1108.

monitions of the heavenly life, a virgin mother of very many virgins devoted to God. They relate of her, that from the time when she sought the monastery she would never wear linen, but only woollen garments, and would seldom wash in a warm bath, except when the greater festivals were at hand, that is to say, of the Passover, of Pentecost, and of the Epiphany; and then would do so last of all, the other handmaids of Christ, who were there, having first washed with her help, and that of her servants. Seldom, except at the greater solemnities, or on some pressing necessity, did she eat more than once in the day, and always, if no serious illness prevented her, from the time of the matin gathering until the dawn of day, she remained in the church intent on prayer. There are also some who relate that, by the spirit of prophecy, she predicted a pestilence of which she herself should die, and also declared openly, in the presence of all, the number of those who should be snatched away from the world out of her monastery by this distemper. Moreover, she was taken to the Lord in the midst of her people, seven years after she had received the grade of abbess; and, just as she had herself ordered, was buried not elsewhere than in the midst of her own people, according to the order in which she passed away, in a wooden coffin.

Sexburg, the sister of this abbess, succeeded her in her office, who had been the wife of Earconberct, king of the Cantuarii. When she had been buried sixteen years, the same abbess thought fit that her bones should be taken up, and, having been put in a new coffin, should be transferred into the church; and she ordered certain of the brethren to seek for a stone of which they might make a coffin for

this purpose ; and they, having gone on board a ship (for this same region of Elge is on every side encompassed by waters and swamps, and has no large stones), came to a certain desolate little city, situate not far from thence, which is called in the tongue of the Angles, Grantacæstir¹, and presently they found, close to the walls of the city, a coffin beautifully wrought of white marble, and covered also most exactly with a lid of the same kind of stone. Whence understanding that their journey had been blest by the Lord, they gave thanks and returned to the monastery.

And when the sepulchre had been opened, and the body of the sacred virgin and spouse of Christ had been brought from the opened sepulchre to light, it was found as uncorrupted as if she had died or been laid in the ground on that same day ; according as the aforesaid prelate Wilfrid, and many others who know it, testify. But the physician Cynefrid, who was present both at her death and also when she was taken up from the tomb, had more sure knowledge ; and he was wont to relate, that in her illness she had a very great tumour under her jaw. ‘And they ordered me,’ said he, ‘to lance the tumour, that the noxious humour which was in it might escape ; which when I had done, she seemed somewhat relieved for two days, so that many thought she might recover from her distemper. But on the third day, being oppressed by a return of her former pains, she was soon snatched from this world, and exchanged all pain and death for eternal salvation and life. And when, after so many years, her bones were to be taken up from the

¹ Now Grantchester, a village near Cambridge.

sepulchre, and a tent¹ having been spread above it, all the assembly of the brothers on one side, and of the sisters on the other, were standing around it singing psalms,—but the abbess herself with a few others, had entered within to take up and wash the bones,—suddenly we heard the abbess within proclaim with a loud voice, “Glory be to the name of the Lord.” And not long after they called for me, the door of the tent being opened from within, and I saw the body of the virgin sacred to God, raised from the tomb and placed on a couch, as though like one asleep. Moreover, the covering of the face having been taken off, they also showed me the wound of the incision which I had made, healed up, so that, in a wonderful manner, instead of the open and gaping wound with which she had been buried, there then appeared the slightest traces only of a scar.’ Besides this, all the linen garments in which the body was wrapped appeared whole, and so new that they seemed to have been put on her chaste limbs that very day. Moreover, they relate that when she was afflicted with the aforesaid tumour and pain of the jaw and neck, she was much pleased with this kind of distemper, and was wont to say, ‘I know most surely that I deservedly bear the weight of my illness on my neck, on which I remember that, when a young girl, I bore a needless weight of necklaces; and I believe that to this end the Supreme Goodness would have me be afflicted with pain in my neck, that thus I may be absolved from the guilt of idle levity; since I have now, instead of gold and pearls, the redness and heat of a tumour

¹ papilione. Cf. Bk. V. Chap. vi., and Bk. III. Chap. xvii. Hence *pavillon*.

prominent on my neck.' Moreover, it happened that by the touch of the same vestments demons were put to flight from the bodies possessed by them, and other distempers, in some cases, cured. Also they say, that the coffin in which she was at first buried was a means of cure to some who were afflicted in their eyes, who when they had put their heads to the same coffin and prayed, presently were relieved of the discomfort of pain or dimness in their eyes. They washed, therefore, the body of the virgin, and having put on it new garments, took it into the church, and placed it in that sarcophagus which had been brought, where even to this day it is held in great veneration. Indeed, in a wonderful manner, the sarcophagus was found fitted for the body of the virgin, just as if it had been specially prepared for it; and the place for the head, worked as a separate part, appeared most aptly shaped to the measure of her head.

Moreover, Elge is in the province of the East Angles, a region of about six hundred families, after the similitude of an island, encompassed, as I said, either by marshes, or by waters; wherefore also it received its name from the abundance of eels which are taken in the same marshes. Here the aforesaid handmaid of Christ desired to have a monastery, since she herself, as I before said, took her fleshly origin from the province of the same East Angles.

CHAPTER XX¹.*A hymn concerning her.*

It seems opportune to insert also in this History, a hymn of virginity, which I composed many years since, in elegiac metre, in praise and eulogy of the same queen and spouse of Christ; and to imitate the method of Holy Scripture, in the historical parts of which very many songs are inserted; and these, it is well known, are composed in metre and verses.

‘Blest Trinity, in every age supreme,
Aid me while I descant upon my theme.
Let Maro wars resound, I will not cease
To sing the gifts of Christ, the gifts of peace.
Tales of lewd Helen’s rape may pleasure bring
To lighter minds; chaste are the songs I sing.
I sing heaven’s gifts, not woful wars of Troy,
Remorseless deeds, in which the earthly joy.
Lo, highest God the holy virgin’s womb
Enters, to rescue man from wretched doom.
The mother-maid the world’s great Parent bears,
By Mary God incarnate here appears.
Bright with virginity’s resplendent sheen,
The sisters hail the mother-maid their queen.
From that pure shoot more virgin flowers spring forth,
Whose great original is her high worth.
The scorching flames that rise around the stake
Nor Agatha, nor chaste Eulalia, shake.
Holy Euphemia, Tecla pure, defy
Wild beasts, with their sublimest constancy.
Undaunted Agnes and Cecilia feel
A joy that laughs to scorn the ruthless steel.

¹ Omitted in the Saxon Version.

Throughout the world, minds stedfast and sedate,
Temperate and pure, with triumph are elate.
Our Ædilhryda, virgin-saint sublime,
Hath blessed and made illustrious our time;
Sprung of a noble sire, of royal race,
And nobler than her lord by heavenly grace,
A queen's estate, a sceptre's regal power,
Were hers below; more is her heavenly dower.
What man would'st thou desire, who art by vows
Contracted to thy Lord, the heavenly spouse?
The mother of heaven's king thy steps attend
So closely, that with thine her glories blend.
Twice six years had she sat in regal pride,
When she became her Lord's affianced bride,
And when her pure soul had become renowned
For lofty deeds, a home in heaven it found.
Sixteen Novembers since was this pure saint
Entomb'd, whose flesh corruption dares not taint.
Christ, by thy power, her grave-clothes still remain
Shining and white, without polluting stain.
The snake of darkness and diseases flee
The contact of those vestments' purity.
Rages the fiend with spite, who Eve betray'd,
While in high triumph shines the glorious maid.
Behold, thou bride of Christ, the glory given
To thee on earth, and in the realms of heaven.
While bright around the festal torches shine,
The bridegroom comes, what joyful gifts are thine!
Thou a new song on the sweet lyre dost play,
A bride exulting—thine own marriage lay.
None from the heavenly flock shall her remove,
Whom none could sever from her Saviour's love.'

CHAPTER XXI.

How Bishop Theodore made peace between the kings Ecgfrid and Ædilred.

IN the ninth year ¹ of the reign of Ecgfrid, a severe battle having been fought between him and Ædilred, king of the Mercians, near the river Treanta ², Ælfwine, King Ecgfrid's brother, was slain ³, a youth about eighteen years of age, and much beloved by both provinces, for King Ædilred had married his sister, who was called Osthryd ⁴. And when matter for a severer war and longer enmity between the kings and their fierce peoples seemed to have arisen, Theodore, the prelate beloved by God, relying on the Divine help, by a wholesome exhortation extinguished entirely the beginning of so great and dangerous a conflagration, so that the kings and peoples having been appeased on either side, the life of no man was given for the

¹ A.D. 679.

² It is most probable that this battle was fought in Staffordshire, at a place called Elford, i.e. Elfwine's ford, on the Trent, which derives its name from the prince there slain. Gibson, in his additions to Camden, Col. 537, describes a tumulus which may have been erected to commemorate this event. (Stevenson.)

³ Wilfrid predicted Ælfwine's death, when the jesters who were about King Ecgfrid were deriding him on his being banished by that king from York. On the anniversary of his banishment, the prince's corpse was brought into the city, and was the occasion of a long period of mourning there. Hædde, Vit. Vilfr. 24.

⁴ This affinity, probably, prevented Wilfrid from taking refuge in Mercia. (Smith.)

king's brother who had been slain, but only the due mulct of money¹ was paid to the king his avenger. The treaties of this peace endured thenceforward a long time, between the same kings and their kingdoms.

CHAPTER XXII.

How the chains of a certain captive were loosened when masses were sung for him.

MOREOVER, in the aforesaid battle, in which King Ælfwine² was killed³, a certain memorable fact is well known to have taken place, which I think ought by no means to be passed over in silence, and that it will, if related, be conducive to the salvation of many. One of his soldiery, a youth, by name Imma, was among others there struck down, who when he had lain that day and the following night among the corpses of the slain, like to one dead, at length recovering his breathing, revived, and sitting up, himself bandaged his wounds as well as he could. Then having rested a little while, he raised himself up and began to depart, in order to

¹ This was the wer-gild, the price at which each man was valued according to his degree, which, in the event of his being slain, was to be paid to his relatives, or gild-brethren. This was a principle common to all Teutonic legislation. The Northumbrian Etheling's wer-gild was 15,000 thrymsas = 112,782 Saxon shillings. Thorpe's Anglo-Saxon Laws, i. 186; Kemble, i. 284. (Moberly.)

² He is called 'a king' also by Hædde, Vit. Vilfr. 13.

³ Stevenson remarks that the expression 'eo die anniversario,' Hædde, Vit. Vilfr. 23, only relates to the day, and does not express that Ælfwine's death took place the year after that of Wilfrid's banishment.

try if he could anywhere find some friends who would take care of him. Which whilst he was doing, he was discovered and taken by some men of the hostile army, and brought to their leader, to wit, one of King Ædilred's earls. By whom being asked who he was, he was afraid to confess that he had been a soldier, and replied that he was a rustic, and poor, and had been united to a wife in the bonds of wedlock, and asserted that he had come on the expedition, with others of the same condition, to bring provisions to the soldiers. The earl entertained him, and took care for his wounds; and when he began to be healed, ordered him to be bound by night, lest he should escape. However, he could not be kept bound, for presently, when they who bound him were departed, these same bonds of his were loosed.

For he had a brother, whose name was Tunna, a presbyter and abbot of a monastery in the city which unto this day is called from his name Tunnacæstir¹; who, when he heard that his brother was killed in battle, came to search, if perchance his body could be found, and thought that another who was found, very like him in all respects, was he: whom bringing to the monastery, he honourably buried, and, for the absolution of his soul, took care often to perform masses. At the celebration of which that took place which I said, that none could bind him without his being presently loosed. In the meantime the earl who kept him began to wonder and

¹ Perhaps the Tovecester of the Domesday Book, 'a city and fortified place on the river Tove,' on the north side of which are the ruins of a Saxon tower. The letters *n* and *v* are frequently confounded together by the decipherers of old MSS. (Giles.) Now Towcester in Northamptonshire.

ask why he could not be bound ; whether perchance he had by him any of those spells ¹ which are spoken of in stories, on account of which he could not be bound. But he replied, that he knew nothing of such arts ; ' But I have,' said he, ' a brother, a priest, in my province, and I know that he, thinking that I am slain, performs frequent masses for me ; and if I were now in another life, my soul would there be freed from punishment through his intercessions.' And whilst he was being detained by the earl for some time, those who regarded him more attentively, observed from his countenance, and habit, and speech, that he was not one of the poor common people, as he had said, but of the nobles ². Then the earl, sending for him privately, asked him more particularly whence he was, promising that, if he would candidly reveal to him who he was, he would do him no harm on that account. Which when he did, declaring that he had been one of the king's attendants, the earl answered, ' I also by each of your answers should have known that you were not a rustic ; and now you indeed deserve death, because all my brothers and kinsmen were killed in that battle ; nevertheless, I will not kill you, lest I swerve from the faith of my promise.'

¹ *literæ solutorizæ*. 'Qualia fuerunt apud antiquos "Ἐφέσια γράμματα, i. e. incantationes quædam obscuræ quas et Croesum in rogo dixisse ferunt. Et Olympiæ Milesio et Ephesio luctantibus, aiunt Milesium luctari non potuisse, quod alter literas Ephesias talo pedis alligasset. Ea autem re comperta, literisque illis solutis, Ephesium tricies prostratum fuisse tradunt.'" Suidas. (Smith.)

² Hussey here remarks, that not all the Anglo-Saxons who could bear arms were soldiers, but only the better class, or nobles ; and compares Bk. V. Chap. x., 'viro illustri, et ad sæculum quoque *nobili*, qui de *milite* factus fuerat monachus.'

When, therefore, he became well, he sold him at London to a certain Fresus; but neither, when he was being led thither, could he at all be bound by him. But when his enemies had put all sorts of bonds upon him, they were loosed; and when he who had bought him had seen that he could not be confined by chains, he gave him leave to ransom himself if he could. Now the bonds were most frequently loosened at the third hour, when the masses were wont to be performed. Then he, having given his oath that he would either return, or send him the money for his ransom, went to Kent to King Hlothere, who was the son¹ of Queen Ædilhryda's sister, of whom mention has been made above, for he had formerly been one of the same queen's attendants, and asked and received of him the price of his redemption, and sent it to his master for his ransom, as he had promised.

And after these things, returning to his country, and coming to his brother, he recounted in order all things which had happened adverse to him, and what consolations he had experienced in adversity; and by what he told him he understood that his chains had been loosened chiefly at those times at which the solemnities of masses had been celebrated for him. Besides, he understood that other things also which had fallen out to his advantage and profit, when he was in danger, had been granted him by heaven through the intercession of his brother and the oblation of the salutary host. And many, hearing these things from the aforesaid man, were stirred up in faith and devotion of piety, to prayer

¹ Sexburga, wife of King Earconberct the father of Hlothere. See Chap. xix. and Bk. III. Chap. viii.

or to almsgiving, or to offering to the Lord the sacrifices of the holy oblation for the deliverance of their friends who had departed from this world; for they understood that the salutary sacrifice availed for the eternal redemption of both soul and body.

Certain of those who heard this history from the very man concerning whom it took place, related it to me. Wherefore, since I had clear knowledge of it, I unhesitatingly believed that it ought to be inserted in my Ecclesiastical History.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Concerning the life and death of the abbess Hild.

IN the year following after this, that is, in the year of the Lord's incarnation 680, the most religious handmaid of Christ, Hild, abbess of the monastery which is called Streaneshalch, as I before related¹, after many heavenly works which she wrought on earth, being taken away from the earth to enjoy the rewards of the celestial life, departed on the fifteenth day of the Kalends of December², when she was sixty-six years of age, which being divided in two equal portions, she spent the first thirty-three in the secular habit, having her conversation most nobly, and consecrated to the Lord as many years following more nobly in the monastic life. For she was also noble by birth, that is, the daughter

¹ Bk. III. Chaps. xxiv. xxv.

² Nov. 17.

of King Ædwin's nephew¹, by name Hereric, with which king also she received the faith and sacraments of Christ, at the preaching of Paulinus of blessed memory, the first bishop of the Northumbrians, and these she preserved inviolate until she had the privilege of attaining to the sight of Him.

When she had given up the secular habit, and determined to serve Him alone, she retired to the province of the East Angles, for she was related to its king, being desirous, if in any way she could, to leave her country and all things that she had, and go thence to Gaul, and lead her life abroad in the monastery of Cale², for the Lord's sake, by which she might more readily attain to the eternal country in heaven³. For her sister, also, Heresuid, the mother of Aldwulf, king of the East Angles, being subject to regular discipline in the same monastery, was expecting at that very time her eternal crown, emulating whose example she herself also continued in the aforesaid province a whole year with the intention of going abroad; afterwards, being recalled to her own country by Bishop Aidan, she received the land of one family, on the north side of the river Viuri⁴, where for one year she led in like manner a monastic

¹ nepotem, 'nephew': not as Florence, p. 632, states, the grandson of Ædwin.

² Chelles. See Bk. III. Chap. viii.

³ Bede has here been accused of error, in that he says that Hilda entered the monastery at Cale A.D. 648; from which it would follow, that it could not have been founded by Bathilde. Bede, however, states that there was a monastery at Cale in A.D. 640. Bk. III. Chap. viii. Bathilde only restored the monastery, which was founded by Clotilde, wife of Clovis the Great.

⁴ The Wear.

life with a very few companions. After this, she was made abbess in the monastery which is called Hereteu¹, which monastery, to wit, had been established not long before, by the religious handmaid of Christ, Heiu², who is said to have been the first woman who took the vow³ and habit of a nun in the province of the Northumbrians, being consecrated by Bishop Aidan. But no long time after the founding of the monastery, she retired to the city of Calcaria⁴, which is called by the nation of the Angles Kælcacæstir, and there fixed her abode. Moreover, Hild, the handmaid of Christ, having been appointed to rule that monastery, presently took care to order it in the regular way of life, in all respects, according as she could gain information from learned men. For Bishop Aidan, also, and all the religious men who knew her were wont to visit her constantly, to love her devotedly, and to instruct her diligently, on account of her innate wisdom, and her delight in the service of God.

When, then, she had presided over this monastery for

¹ Now Hartlepool, at present almost an island from the inroads of the sea. The remains still exist there of a later foundation of the 'fratres minores.' The parochial church, together with others in that district, was made over to the monastery of Gisborough by its founder, Robert de Brus.

² Leland and others identify her, but without sufficient reason, with Begu (Chap. xxiv.) who founded St. Bees'.

³ propositum. Cf. Chap. xxiv., 'monachicum suscipere propositum.'

⁴ Mentioned by Antoninus, Mon. Hist. Brit. p. 21, and said by him to be nine miles from York. Now Tadcaster. Camden, Brit. Col. 714. Murray, Yorkshire, p. 462, says: 'The village of Healaugh, about three miles north of Tadcaster, is believed to mark the site of St. Heiu's foundation, and possibly preserves her name,—Heiu-læg, Heiu's territory.'

some years¹, being very intent on establishing the regular way of life, it happened that she undertook also to construct or set in order a monastery in the place which is called Streaneshalch; and this work being enjoined on her, she was not remiss in accomplishing it. For she established this also in the same discipline of regular life in which she established the former monastery; and, indeed, taught there also the strict observance of justice, piety, and chastity, and of the other virtues, but mostly of peace and charity, so that, after the example of the primitive Church, there was therein no one rich, no one poor; all things were common to all, since nothing seemed to be the private property of any one. Moreover, her prudence was so great, that not only did ordinary persons, but even sometimes kings and princes, seek and receive counsel of her in their necessities. She made those who were under her direction give so much time to the reading of the Divine Scriptures, and exercise themselves so much in works of righteousness, that very many, it appeared, could readily be found there, who could worthily enter upon the ecclesiastical grade², that is, the service of the altar.

In short, we afterwards saw five bishops from the same monastery, and those all men of singular merit and sanctity, of whom these are the names, Bosa³, Ætla⁴, Oftfor⁵,

¹ The monastery of Streanæshalch was begun in A.D. 658 or 657, two years after the battle of the Winwæd, which was at the end of A.D. 655. See Bk. III. Chap. xxiv.

² = βαθμὸς. See 1 Tim. iii. 13.

³ Concerning Bosa, bishop of York, see Chap. xii.

⁴ Ætla was made bishop of Dorchester, when Mercia was divided into five dioceses, A.D. 679. See Chap. xii. Florence, p. 685.

⁵ Bishop of the Huiccii, or Worcester.

John¹, and Wilfrid². Concerning the first of them, I have said above, that he was consecrated bishop of York; of the second, it is briefly to be noticed, that he was ordained to the bishopric of Dorciccæstræ; concerning the two last I must speak hereafter, how the first of them was ordained bishop of the church of Hagustald, the second of the church of York. Let me now speak of the third; how when, in both the monasteries of the abbess Hild, he had given attention to reading and observation of the Scriptures, at length, desiring greater perfection, he went to Kent, to Archbishop Theodore of blessed memory, and after he had there spent some time in sacred studies, he determined to go to Rome also, which at that time was thought an undertaking of great merit; and when, on his return thence, he had come to Britain, he turned aside to the province of the Huiccii³, which King Osric⁴ then governed, and there he remained a long while, preaching the word of faith, and, at the same time making himself an example of life both to them who saw, and to them who heard him. At which time, the prelate of that province, by name Bosel, was afflicted with so great bodily infirmity, that he was unable

¹ Bishop of Hexham (the celebrated St. John of Beverley, Bk. V. Chap. ii.), translated to York.

² For Wilfrid II. of York, see Bk. V. Chap. vi. The Saxon Chronicle, ad an. 685, calls him Wilferth. William of Malmesbury clearly distinguishes this second Wilfrid, by speaking of him as '*Johannis presbyterum et successorem.*' Gest. Pont. iii. p. 269.

³ The territory of the Huiccii was a part of Mercia. Worcester was the see of this diocese, and took precedence of the other four Mercian sees. See Florence, p. 685.

⁴ Osric was, probably, a '*subregulus.*' Kemble, however, Cod. Diplom. No. XII., gives a charter signed by him in Nov. A.D. 676.

to discharge by himself the office of the episcopate ; on which account, by the judgment of all, the aforesaid man was elected to the episcopate, in his place, and, by the command of King Ædilred, was ordained by Bishop Wilfrid of blessed memory, who at that time¹ held the episcopate of the Midland Angles, because Archbishop Theodore was now dead, and no other bishop as yet had been ordained in his place. Of which province, to wit, a short time previously—that is, before the aforesaid man of God, Bosel—a very energetic and learned man, and of excellent ability, by name Tatfrid, was chosen prelate, from the monastery of the same abbess ; but, before he could be ordained, he was snatched away by an untimely death.

Not only, however, was the aforesaid handmaid of Christ and abbess, Hild, whom all who knew her were wont to call Mother, in token of her piety and grace, an example of life to those who were present in her own monastery ; but she even afforded occasion of salvation and amendment to very many who lived at a distance, whom the happy report of her industry and virtue reached. For it behoved that the dream should be fulfilled which her mother Bregusuid² saw during her infancy ; who, when her husband Hereric³ was in exile, under Cerdic⁴, king of the Britons, where he also

¹ About A.D. 691. Cf. Bk. V. Chap. viii. Tatfrid was appointed bishop of Worcester, but died before he was consecrated. He was succeeded by Bosel, who died A.D. 692, and was succeeded by Ecgwine.

² Called Beorhtswith by Florence, p. 632.

³ Hereric was the son of Eadfrith, the son of Ædwin, by Quœnburga.

⁴ King of the Britons in Elmete, from which he was driven by Ædwin, king of Northumbria. Geoffry of Monmouth, and others, speak of Careticus, or Catericus, a British king, who reigned between Malgo and Cadvan, and

died by poison, dreamed that he was suddenly taken from her, and that she sought him with all diligence, but no trace of him appeared anywhere; and that when she had sought him with the greatest solicitude, she found on a sudden under her garment a most precious necklace, which, while she was looking at it intently, appeared to shine with the brilliance of so great a light, as to fill all the limits of Britain with the grace of that splendour. Which dream, forsooth, was truthfully fulfilled in her daughter, concerning whom I am speaking, whose life afforded examples of the works of light not only to herself, but to many who were desirous of living well.

But when she had for many years presided over this monastery, it pleased the good Provider of our salvation, that her holy soul should be severely tried even by a long sickness, that, according to the example of the apostle, her virtue might be perfected in weakness. For, being seized with a fever, she began to be distressed with a violent heat, and for six continuous years ceased not to labour under the same ailment; during the whole of which time she never omitted either to give thanks to her Maker, or to teach both publicly and privately the flock committed to her. For, having been herself previously instructed, she admonished all persons by her own example, that they ought obediently

was, after many conflicts, driven by the Saxons beyond the Severn. See Nenn. Hist. 63; Galfrid. Mon. viii. 2, ix. 1. Williams, Eccles. Antiq. of the Cymry, calls him Ceredig. We read of a 'Kereticus infelix,' who reigned in Wales from A.D. 566 to 575, and of a district called Kereticiaun, now Cardigan. Ann. Menev., Angl. Sacr. II. xxxi. Nennius speaks of a Cerdic of Elmete, who was interpreter to Vortigern in his intercourse with the Saxons. Mon. Hist. Brit. p. 65.

to serve the Lord in their bodily health, which they have received from Him, and that they ought always faithfully to give thanks to the Lord, in adversity as well as in bodily infirmity. On the seventh year, then, of her sickness, the complaint having turned inward, she came to her last day, and about cock-crowing, having received the viaticum of the Holy Communion, when, having summoned to her the handmaids of Christ who were in the same monastery, she was admonishing them concerning the keeping of evangelical peace one with another, and with all, she perceived with joy her death approaching¹, during her words of exhortation; yea, to use the Lord's words, she passed from death unto life.

On which night, to wit, the omnipotent Lord deigned to reveal by a manifest vision her death in another monastery, situated at a considerable distance, which she herself had built that same year, and which is called Hacanas². There was in the same monastery a certain holy woman, by name Begu³, who, having dedicated her virginity to the Lord for thirty years and more, served Him in the monastic conversation. She then, when resting⁴ in the dormitory of the sisters, heard suddenly in the air the well-known sound of

¹ She died Nov. 17, A.D. 680, Florence. King Eadmund translated her remains to Glastonbury.

² Hackness, thirteen miles from Whitby, and three from Scarborough. There was a cell here belonging to Whitby, which was destroyed by the Danes, A.D. 869. In A.D. 1088, Serlo de Percy, abbot of Whitby, rebuilt it. At the dissolution it contained four monks of the Benedictine order.

³ St. Bega, or St. Bee, came from Ireland, and built a monastery named after her, near Copeland Forest, Cumberland.

⁴ *pausans* here means 'cubans,' not 'moriens,' as in Chap. ix.

the bell by which they were wont to be aroused or assembled to prayers, when any one of them was called forth from this world; and with her eyes open, as it seemed to her, she saw the roof of the house uncovered, and a light shed from above fill all things. At which light, to wit, as she was looking earnestly, she saw the soul of the aforesaid handmaid of God, in the self-same light, borne to heaven by attendant and conducting angels. And when, being aroused from sleep, she saw the rest of the sisters sleeping around her, she understood that what she had seen had been shown to her either in a dream or in a vision of the mind. And immediately arising, alarmed with excessive fear, she ran to the virgin who then ruled the monastery in the place of the abbess, whose name was Frigyd, and being greatly bathed in weeping and tears, and drawing deep sighs, told her that Hild the abbess, the mother of them all, had just then departed from this world, and that she herself had seen her ascend with exceeding light, having angels for guides, to the abodes of eternal light, and the society of the celestial citizens. Which when she had heard, she aroused all the sisters, and having called them to the church, admonished them to employ themselves in prayers and psalms for the soul of their mother. Which when they had diligently done for the remainder of the night-time, some brethren came at the beginning of dawn from the place where she deceased, to announce her death. But they answering, said that they had known it before; and when they explained in order how and when they had learnt this, it was found that her departure had been revealed to them by a vision at the same hour at which they said that she had departed

from this world. Thus by a beautiful harmony of circumstances it was divinely ordained that when some were beholding her departure from this life, others were being made acquainted with her entrance into the eternal life of souls. Moreover, these monasteries are distant from each other about thirteen miles.

They relate besides, that on the same night, in the same monastery also in which the aforesaid handmaid of Christ died, her decease appeared in a vision to one of the virgins devoted to God, who loved her with exceeding affection, and who beheld her soul go to heaven, accompanied by angels, and at the very hour at which this took place, clearly related it to those handmaids of Christ who were with her, and called upon them to pray for her soul, even before the rest of the society had known of her decease. The truth of this became presently known to the whole assembly in the morning. For she was at that very hour located with a few of the other handmaids of Christ in the most remote part of the monastery by themselves, where women who had recently come to the monastic conversation were wont to be proved, until, having been regularly instructed, they were received into the society of the congregation.

CHAPTER XXIV.

How in her monastery was a brother, to whom the gift of singing was divinely granted.

IN the monastery of this abbess was a certain brother especially marked by Divine grace, since he was wont to

make songs suited to religion and piety, so that whatever he had learnt from the Divine writings through interpreters, this he in a little while produced in poetical expressions composed with the greatest harmony and accuracy, in his own tongue, that is, in that of the Angles. By his songs the minds of many were excited to condemn the world, and desire the celestial life. And, indeed, others also after him in the nation of the Angles attempted to compose religious poems, but none could equal him. For he himself did not learn the art of poetry from men, or by being instructed by man; but, being divinely assisted, received gratuitously the gift of singing, on which account he never could compose any frivolous or idle poem, but those only which pertain to religion suited his religious tongue. For having lived in the secular habit unto the time of advanced age, he had never learned anything of singing. Whence, sometimes at an entertainment, when it was determined for the sake of mirth that all should sing in order, he, when he saw the harp approaching him, used to rise in the midst of the supper, and, having gone out, walk back to his home.

Which when he was doing on a time, and, having left the house of entertainment, had gone out to the stables of the beasts of burden, the care of which was entrusted to him on that night, and there, at the proper hour, had resigned his limbs to sleep, a certain one stood by him in a dream, who saluting him, and calling him by his name, said, 'Cædmon¹,

¹ Ceadman, Saxon Version. Gul. Malmesb. Gest. Pont. iii. p. 154 : 'Inventa sunt noviter (i. e. ante initium sæculi xii.), et in eminentiam elata, sanctorum corpora, Trumuini ep., Osuii regis, et Ælfledæ filiæ ejus, quæ eidem monasterio post Hildam præfuit: nec non et illius monachi quem

sing me something.' Then he answering said, 'I know not how to sing; and for that reason I went out from the entertainment and retired hither, because I could not sing.' Again he who was talking with him said, 'Yet you have something to sing to me.' 'What,' said he, 'must I sing?' The other said, 'Sing the beginning of created things.' Having received this reply, he immediately began to sing verses in praise of God the Creator, which he had never heard, whereof this is the purport:—'Now we must praise the Author of the celestial kingdom, the power of the Creator and His counsel, the deeds of the Father of glory. How He, being eternal God, was the author of all wonderful things; who first created heaven for the sons of men, as the roof of their dwelling, and afterwards created the earth, being the omnipotent guardian of mankind.' This is the sense, but not the exact order of the words which he sang in his sleep, for songs, however excellently composed, cannot be translated from one tongue into another, word for word, without some loss of their beauty and spirit. Moreover, on his rising up from sleep, he retained in memory all that he had sung in his dream, and presently added to it more words of song worthy of God, after the same fashion.

And coming in the morning to the steward who was set

Divino munere scientiam cantus accepisse Beda refert. Cujus non fuisse apud Deum popolare meritum, miracula modo multa, ut ferunt, superne demissa prætendunt indicium. The Martyrologium Anglicanum commemorates his natal day on Feb. 11. In the Moore MS., believed to have been written shortly after Bede's death, the original Saxon of Cædmon's first song is preserved. In King Alfred's Saxon Version of the History, the original Saxon verses are introduced, and consequently the words, 'Hic est sensus . . . dignitatis transferri,' are untranslated.

over him, he told him what a gift he had received; and having been brought to the abbess, he was ordered, in the presence of many learned men, to declare his dream and to repeat the song, that it might be tested, by the judgment of all, what or whence it was that he related. And all concluded that a celestial gift had been granted him by the Lord. And they interpreted to him a certain passage of sacred history or doctrine, and ordered him to transpose it, if he could, into poetical rhythm. And he, having undertaken it, departed, and returning in the morning, brought back what he was ordered to do, composed in most excellent verse. Whereupon presently the abbess, embracing heartily the grace of God in the man, instructed him to leave the secular habit, and to take the monastic vow; and having, together with all her people, received him into the monastery, associated him with the company of the brethren, and ordered him to be instructed in the whole course of sacred history. And he converted into most sweet song whatever he could learn from hearing, by thinking it over by himself, and, as though a clean animal, by *ruminating*; and by making it resound more sweetly, made his teachers in turn his hearers. Moreover, he sang of the creation of the world, and the origin of mankind, and the whole history of Genesis; concerning the going out of Israel from Egypt, and their entrance into the land of promise¹, and of very many other histories of Holy Scripture; of the Lord's incarnation,

¹ A large fragment of a Saxon poem embracing some of the subjects here mentioned, is preserved in a MS. of the tenth century at Oxford, and has generally been identified with Cædmon's work mentioned by Bede. It was printed by Junius in 1655, and by Thorpe in 1832.

passion, resurrection, and ascension into heaven; of the coming of the Holy Ghost, and the teaching of the apostles. He also made many songs concerning the terror of the future judgment, and the horror of the punishment of Gehenna, and the sweetness of the heavenly kingdom; besides many more, concerning the Divine benefits and judgments, in all which he endeavoured to draw men away from the love of wickedness, and to excite them to the love and diligent practice of well-doing. For he was a very religious man, and humbly subject to the rules of regular discipline; but inflamed with a zeal of great fervour against those who would act contrary; wherefore also he made a fair ending of his life.

For when the hour of his decease drew near, it was preceded by a bodily infirmity, and he was ill fourteen days, yet not so ill but that he could both talk and walk during the whole of that time. Moreover, in the vicinity was a cottage, to which those who were sick and seemed about to die were wont to be brought. He, therefore, asked his attendant, at the approach of evening, on the night in which he was to depart from this world, to prepare a place for him to take his rest in that cottage; and the person wondered why he asked this when as yet he did not seem likely to die; yet he did what he had ordered. And when, having come there, they were in a cheerful manner talking and pleasantly discoursing with those who were there before, and it was now past midnight, he asked if they had the Eucharist within¹. They answered, 'What need is there of the Eucharist?

¹ This seems to prove that the Eucharist was not always given to the recipient by the hands of the consecrating priest; and further, that it was reserved to be used on any sudden emergency.

for you are not yet about to die, since you talk so cheerfully with us, as though you were in perfect health.' Again he said, 'Yet bring me the Eucharist.' Having received it in his hand¹, he asked if the minds of all were peaceably disposed toward him, and free from any complaint or rancour against him. All answered that their minds were most peacefully disposed toward him, and free from all anger; and in turn asked him whether his mind was at peace with them. And he immediately answered, 'I have a mind, my dear sons, at peace with all the servants of God.' And so having fortified himself with the heavenly viaticum, he prepared for his entrance into another life, and asked how near the time was at which the brethren would be awakened to say the nightly lauds to the Lord. They answered, 'It is not far distant.' And he said, 'It is well; let us wait then for that hour.' And signing himself with the sign of the holy cross, he reclined his head on the pillow, and having slept for a little while, so ended his life in silence. And thus it came to pass that as he had served the Lord with a simple and pure mind, and with tranquil devotion, so also when he left this world, he came by a tranquil death to the vision of Him; and that tongue which had composed so many holy words in praise of the Creator, concluded also its last words in His praise, while he was in the act of signing himself and commending his spirit into His hands. And from what I have before related, he seems also to have been forewarned of his departure.

¹ On the custom for men to receive the Eucharist in the hand, but for women to receive it on a linen cloth, see Baron. in annot. ad Martyr. 15 Aug. lit. c. After the establishment of the doctrine of transubstantiation, it was strictly forbidden to receive the Eucharist in the hand, as had been the custom previously. See Bingham, Or. Eccles. XV. v. § 6.

CHAPTER XXV.

How a vision appeared to a certain man of God, before the monastery of the City of Colud was consumed by fire.

AT this time the monastery of virgins called the City of Colud, of which I have also made mention above, was consumed by flames through the fault of carelessness. All, however, who knew it, could most easily perceive that this happened from the wickedness of those who dwelt in it, and chiefly of those who seemed to be the superiors. But those who were to be punished were not left without a warning given by Divine Providence, by which they might have been corrected, and might, by fastings, weeping, and prayers, like the Ninevites, have averted from themselves the anger of the Just Judge. For there was in the same monastery a man of the race of the Scots, by name Adamnan¹, leading a life greatly devoted to God, in continence and prayers, insomuch that he never took any food or drink, except on the Lord's day and on the fifth day of the week; moreover, he often passed whole nights watching in prayer. This strictness of austere life was, indeed, first adopted by him from the necessity of correcting his depravity; but in process of time he had converted this necessity into a custom.

For in his youth he had committed some wickedness which, when he came to himself, he was very seriously

¹ To be distinguished from Adomnan, the eighth abbot of Iona, Bk. V. Chap. xv. He was simply a monk at Coldingham, though he has been erroneously called the abbot.

alarmed at, and feared that he should be punished for it by the exact Judge. Going, therefore, to a priest, by whom he hoped that the way of salvation could be shown him, he confessed his guilt, and requested that he would give him counsel how to flee from the wrath to come. And he, having heard his offence, said, 'A great wound requires greater care in the treatment, and therefore be instant, as much as you can, in fastings, psalms, and prayers, in order that by gaining the Lord's countenance in your confession, you may deserve to find Him propitious.' But he, forasmuch as he was afflicted with very great grief of a guilty conscience, desired to be speedily absolved from the inward bonds of his sins whereby he was oppressed. 'I am,' he said, 'youthful in age and healthful of body; whatever you impose on me, so only that I may be saved in the day of the Lord, I will readily endure, even if you should bid me spend the whole night in prayers standing, or to pass the whole of the week in abstinence.' The priest replied, 'It is too much for you to continue during the whole week without food for the body; and it is enough to observe a fast for two or three days. This do, until after a little while I return to you, and more fully show you what you must do, and how long you must persist in your penance.' Having said this, and having prescribed to him the measure of his penance, the priest departed, and, on a sudden pressing occasion, withdrew to Ireland, whence he derived his origin, and did not again return to him as he had appointed. And he being mindful of his charge, and also of his own promise, entirely gave himself up to tears of penitence, holy watchings, and continence; so that he took food only on the fifth day of the week, and on the Lord's

day, as I before said, and kept a fast on the other days of the week. And when he heard that his priest had retired to Ireland and had there died, he ever from that time observed a measure of abstinence according to his compact above-mentioned; and what he had once undertaken through fear of God, when feeling compunction for his guilt, he now, being delighted with its rewards, indefatigably practised for the love of God.

When he had diligently pursued this course for a long time, it happened on a certain day that he went forth to some distance from the monastery accompanied by one of the brothers. When they were returning from their journey, and, approaching the monastery, beheld its lofty buildings, the man of God burst into tears, and betrayed the sorrow of his heart by the tokens of his countenance. His companion perceiving this, asked him the reason why he was so affected. And he said, 'The time is at hand when consuming fire shall convert to ashes all these buildings, public or private, which you behold.' And the other hearing this, presently, when they came into the monastery, took care to tell it to the mother of the congregation, by name *Æbba*¹. And she, not without cause being troubled at such a presage, called the man to her, and more particularly enquired of him concerning the matter, and whence he knew this. And he said, 'Lately, whilst I was occupied at night in vigils and psalms, I suddenly saw standing by me a person whose countenance was unknown to me; and when I was alarmed at his presence, he told me not to fear, and, addressing me as with a familiar voice, said, "You do well, who at this

¹ *Æbba* was the aunt of King *Ecgfrid*. See Chap. xix.

time of nightly quiet, have chosen not to indulge in sleep, but to persist in vigils and prayers." And I said, "I know that it is very needful for me to be instant in salutary vigils, and constantly to pray to the Lord for the pardon of my transgressions." He replied, "You say the truth, since both you and many others have need to redeem their sins by good works; and when they cease from their labours in temporal affairs, then to labour more freely for the enjoyment of the good things that are eternal; but yet very few do this; for just now, going over the whole of this monastery in order, I inspected the cells and beds of each, and found no one of them all, except you, occupied about the care of the soul; but all, both men and women, either are wrapt in slothful sleep, or are awake to commit sins. For even the cells which were built for praying or reading are now converted into places of revelling, drinking, conversation, and other allurements; the virgins also, dedicated to God, laying aside all reverence for their profession, whenever they have leisure, spend their time in weaving fine garments, with which to adorn themselves like brides, to the danger of their condition, or to gain for themselves the friendship of strange men. Wherefore a heavy vengeance from heaven, with raging flames, is deservedly prepared for this place and its inhabitants." ' Moreover, the abbess said, 'And why would you not reveal this discovery to me before?' He answered, 'I feared to do so, out of respect for you, lest perchance you should be too much troubled: yet you may have this consolation, that this stroke shall not happen in your days.' This vision having been made known, the inhabitants of the place began to be somewhat afraid for a few days, and having left

off their sins, to amend themselves. But after the death of that abbess, they returned to their old pollutions, yea, they committed greater crimes. And when they said 'Peace and security¹,' they were suddenly visited with the penalty of the aforesaid vengeance.

That all this so took place, my most reverend fellow-presbyter Ædgils, who was then living in that monastery, related to me. But afterwards, when very many of the inhabitants had departed thence on account of the desolation, he had his conversation for a long time in our monastery, and there died. These things, then, I have thought fit to insert in my History, to admonish the reader of the works of the Lord, how terrible He is in His counsels concerning the sons of men², lest perchance, at some time, when we are serving the allurements of the flesh, and are too little afraid of the judgments of God, His sudden anger seize on us, and, in its just rage, either afflict us with temporal losses, or punishing us more severely, hurry us to eternal perdition.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Concerning the death of the kings Ecgfrid and Hlothere.

IN the year of the Lord's incarnation 684, Ecgfrid, the king of the Northumbrians, having sent an army to Ireland³ under the command of Berct, miserably wasted a nation that

¹ 1 Thess. v. 3.

² Psalm lxvi. 5.

³ Tigernach, ad a. 685. 'Saxones campum Bregiæ' (*East Meath*. Usser, *Antiq.* xvii. p. 441) 'vastant, et ecclesias plurimas in mense Junii,' also *Annal.* iv. Magr. ad a.

was innocent and always most friendly to the nation of the Angles; so that the hostile force spared not even the churches or monasteries. But the islanders both, as far as they could, repelled force by force, and, invoking the aid of Divine goodness, entreated for a long time, with continual imprecations on their foes, that they might be avenged by heaven. And although those who curse cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven, it is nevertheless believed that these who were deservedly cursed for their impiety soon paid the penalty of their guilt, the Lord being the avenger. For, the next year after this, the same king, when he had rashly led an army to devastate the province of the Picts, although his friends, and expecially Cudberct¹ of blessed memory, who had been lately ordained bishop, greatly dissuaded him, he was drawn, by the enemy pretending flight, into the defiles² of inaccessible mountains, and was killed, together with the greatest part of the forces which he had brought with him, in the fortieth year of his age, and the fifteenth of his reign, on the thirteenth day of the Kalends of June. And truly, as I said, his friends dissuaded him from entering on this war, but inasmuch as in the preceding year he would not listen to the most reverend father Ecgbert³, who advised him not to attack Scotland⁴, which was doing him no harm, it was allotted to

¹ See Bede's Life of Cuthbert, chaps. xxiv. xxvii.

² 'Extinctum regem apud Nechtanesmere, quod est stagnum Nectani, ejusque corpus in Hii insula sepultum.' Simeon of Durham, p. 51. Supposed to be Dunnichen, near Forfar. Burton's Hist. of Scot. i. 312.

³ Ecgbert had lived as a monk in Ireland. See Bk. III. Chap. xxvii.

⁴ Here Scottia seems to mean Ireland; and the words 'nil se lædentem' correspond with those above, 'gentem innoxiam et nationi Anglorum semper amicissimam,' as being descriptive of its character at that time; but, 'in

him as a punishment of that fault that he should not now listen to those who desired to deter him from his destruction.

From this time the hopes and strength of the kingdom of the Angles began to decline and retrograde¹. For both the Picts recovered the land of their possession which the Angles and Scots who were in Britain held, and also some part of the Britons regained their liberty, which they have now enjoyed for about forty-six years². At which time, among very many of the nation of the Angles who were either killed by the sword, or made slaves, or who escaped by flight from the land of the Picts, that most reverend man of God, Trumwine, who had received the episcopate over them, retired with his people who were in the monastery of *Æbbercurnig*³, situate indeed in the region of the Angles, but in the vicinity of the frith which divides the lands of the Angles from those of the Picts; and having commended them, wheresoever he could, to friends in the different monasteries, he chose his own dwelling-place in the oft-mentioned monastery of the servants and handmaids of God, which is called *Streanæs-halch*; and there, together with a few of his people, led his

both which' (respects), says Milton, 'they seem to have left a posterity much unlike them at this day.' *Hist. of Britain*, Bk. iv.

¹ *Virg. Æn.* ii. 169:

'Ex illo fluere et retro sublapsa referri
Spes Danaum, fractæ vires.'

The war commenced in the early part of the reign of Ecgfrid, who became king A.D. 670, when, in the words of Hædde, '*populi bestiales Pictorum feroci animo subjectionem Saxonum despiciebant.*' At that time Ecgfrid reduced them to subjection. Ecgfrid also defeated Wulfhere king of the Mercians (chap. xii.), and, according to Hædde's account, was always prosperous as long as he had the friendship of Wilfrid. *Vit. Vilfr.* 19-21.

² Hence Bede wrote about A.D. 731.

³ See note to p. 31.

life for a long period of years in monastic austerity, not only profitable to himself but also to many others; where also having died, he was buried¹ in the church of the blessed apostle Peter with the honour due both to his life and degree. The royal virgin Ælbfled², with her mother Eanfleda, at that time presided over the same monastery, of whom I have above made mention³. But on the bishop coming thither, the preceptress devoted to God found in him great assistance in governing, and also comfort for her own life. Moreover, Alfrid⁴ succeeded Ecgfrid in the kingdom, being a man most learned in the Scriptures, who was said to be his brother and the son of king Oswy: and he nobly restored the ruined state of the kingdom, although within narrower bounds.

In which year, to wit, that is, the year from the Lord's incarnation 685, Hlothere, king of the Cantuarii, died on the eighth day before the Ides of February, when he had reigned twelve years, after Ecgberct his brother, who had reigned nine years. For he was wounded in a battle with the South Saxons, whom Edric the son of Ecgberct had assembled against him, and died while under medical treatment. After him the same Edric reigned one year and a half: on whose death kings of doubtful title, or of foreign extraction, wasted

¹ See note, p. 350.

² Ælflæd, Saxon Version.

³ Bk. III. Chaps. xv. xxiv.

⁴ An older but illegitimate son of Ecgfrid. He retired to Ireland, and is said by William of Malmesbury, *Gest. Reg. i. p. 21*, 'Ibi magno otio literis imbutum, omni philosophia animum composuisse, quocirca illos qui eum quondam expulerant ultro expetivisse.' It is not improbable that the protection afforded him by the Irish, may have been Ecgfrid's pretext for invading Ireland. Ecgfrid died May 20, A.D. 685.

that kingdom for some space of time¹, until the lawful king Victred², that is, the son of Ecgberct, being strengthened in the government, by his religion, and also by his zeal, freed his nation from foreign invasion.

CHAPTER XXVII.

How the man of God, Cudberct, was made bishop; and how he lived and taught while he was as yet leading a monastic life.

ALSO in the same year in which king Ecgfrid ended his life, he had, as I have said, caused the holy and venerable man, Cudberct, to be ordained bishop of the church of Lindisfarne, who in the very small island which is called Farne³, and is distant in the ocean about nine miles from the same church, had led a solitary life for many years in great continence of body and mind. He, indeed, from his early childhood had always

¹ In A.D. 686 Cædualla, and Mul his brother invaded Kent, and the next year, on their retreat, Mul, with twelve others, was burnt in a house in which they had taken refuge by the Kentish men. In A.D. 694, Ina made peace with the Kentish men, on their delivering up to him thirty men (Saxon Chronicle), or, as others say, paying him 30,000 marks in gold.

² Edric died A.D. 687, the same year that Mul was burnt, and Kent was the second time ravaged by Cædualla. Ina succeeded to the throne of the West-Saxons A.D. 688. In A.D. 690 two rival princes contended for the throne of Kent, Victred and Wæbheard (or Suzæbhard): at length in A.D. 694, the year when peace was made with Ina, Victred obtained sole possession of the kingdom. Sax. Chron. Bede, Bk. V. Chap. xxiii. says that Victred died A.D. 725, having reigned thirty-four years and a half. According to this, A.D. 690 would be the date of his accession.

³ See Bk. III. Chap. xvi.

been inflamed with desire for the religious life, and on his coming to man's estate he took upon him both the name and habit of a monk. Moreover, he first entered the monastery of Mailros¹, which, being situate on the bank of the river Tuidi, the abbot Eata, a man of all men most meek and sincere, ruled; who was afterwards made bishop of the church of Hagustald or Lindisfarne, as I have above said, over which, at that time, Boisil was set, a priest of great virtues and of a prophetic spirit. Cudberct, humbly submitting himself to this man's teaching, received from him both the knowledge of the Scriptures, and examples of good works.

And after he had departed to the Lord, Cudberct was made ruler over the same monastery, and instructed many in the regular life both by his authority as a master, and by the example of his own actions. And not only to that monastery did he afford both admonitions and examples of regular life, but also took care to convert the common people who dwelt round about him far and wide, from a life of foolish customs to the love of heavenly joys. For many profaned the faith which they held by their evil works; and some even, in the time of a mortality, neglecting the sacraments of the faith in which they had been initiated, had recourse to the fallacious remedies of idolatry, as though they could check a plague sent by God their Maker by incantations, or spells², or any other secrets of devilish art. Therefore, in order to correct the error of both classes of persons, he frequently

¹ Melrose. Situate twenty miles from Berwick. St. David, King of Scotland, and son of Malcolm and Margaret, restored the monastery, and gave it with others to the Cistercian order. Richard was constituted the first abbot A.D. 1136.

² See Bk. III. Chap. xxvi.

went forth from the monastery, sometimes on horseback, but oftener on foot, and going to the surrounding villages, taught the erring the way of truth; which same thing Boisil also in his time had been wont to do. For indeed it was the custom of the peoples of the Angles at that time¹, that, when a cleric or priest came to a village, all flocked together at his summons to hear the Word: willingly heard the things which were spoken: more willingly practised the things which they could hear and understand. Furthermore, so great was Cudberct's skill in speaking, so great his desire of enforcing what he took in hand, and such the light of his angelic countenance, that no one present presumed to conceal from him the secrets of his heart; all openly revealed by confession what they had done, because, forsooth, they thought that these same things could in no way escape his knowledge; and wiped out the sins they confessed by worthy fruits of penitence, as he enjoined. Moreover, he was wont mostly to traverse those places, and to preach in those little villages which, being situate afar off on steep and rugged mountains, others had a horror of visiting, and which repelled the access of teachers both by their poverty and rusticity. These, nevertheless, he, willingly devoting himself to the pious labour, instructed with so great industry of skilful teaching, that often, when he had gone forth from the monastery, he did not return home for a whole week, sometimes for two or three, occasionally even for a whole month; but tarrying among the mountaineers, he called the rustic

¹ It is hence evident that one chief use of the monasteries before the establishment of the parochial church system, was to instruct and minister the offices of religion to the surrounding people.

people, both by the word of preaching and by the work of virtue, to heavenly things.

When, therefore, this venerable servant of the Lord, passing many years in the monastery of Mailros, shone forth with great signs of virtues, his most reverend abbot, named Eata, removed him to the isle of Lindisfarne, that there also he might both make the brethren acquainted with the keeping of regular discipline, by the authority of a superior, and might set them a pattern by his own practice. For the same reverend father then ruled that place with the authority of abbot. Since from ancient times, both a bishop was wont to reside there with his clergy, and an abbot with his monks, who, nevertheless, themselves also were under the fatherly care of the bishop. Since Aidan, to wit, who was the first bishop of that place, himself also being a monk, came thither with monks, and instituted in it the monastic conversation, in the way in which also the blessed father Augustine is known to have done before in Kent, the most reverend pope Gregory writing to him, as also I have set down above¹. 'But because you, my brother,' he says, 'having been instructed in the rules of the monastery, ought not to be separated from your own clergy, you ought to institute in the Church of the Angles, which lately, by God's providence, has been brought to the faith, that course of life which our fathers followed in the beginning of the infant Church; among whom none said that aught of those things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.'

¹ See Bk. I. Chap. xxvii.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

How the same, while leading an anchoretic life, both procured a fountain from the arid earth by his prayers, and received a crop from the labour of his hands after the time of sowing was past.

AFTERWARDS Cudberct, the merits of his religious devotion increasing, proceeded also to the secret silence of anchoretic contemplation¹ of which I have spoken. But because I wrote enough many years since concerning his life and virtues, both in heroic verses and in plain prose, let it suffice at present to make mention of this only, that when about to repair to the island, he made an address to the brethren, saying, 'If divine grace shall grant me that I may be able to live in that place by the labour of my hands, I will willingly abide there, but if otherwise, God willing, I will return very soon to you.' Moreover, the place was entirely destitute of water, and corn, and trees, and besides ill suited for human habitation from its being the haunt of malignant spirits; but at the entreaty of the man of God, it became habitable in all respects, since, at his coming, the malignant spirits withdrew. Moreover, when, having expelled his enemies, he had there built, with the assistance of the brethren, a small dwelling surrounded by a mound², and the

¹ A.D. 676. 'Sanctus Cuthbertus anachoreticæ contemplationis secreta petiit.' Florence. Almost all the rest of this book is taken from Bede's prose life of Cuthbert.

² 'Est autem ædificium situ pene rotundum, a muro usque ad murum mensura quatuor ferme sive quinque perticarum distentum; murus ipse

necessary apartments in it, that is, an oratory and a common room, he ordered the brethren to dig a pit in the floor of the same room: but the earth was very hard and stony, and gave no hope of a spring of water. Which when they had done, at the faith and at the prayers of the servant of God, it was found the next day full of water, and unto this day affords a sufficient supply of its heavenly bounty to all who resort thither. Furthermore, he requested that rural implements might be brought him, and also some wheat; which when he had sown at the fit time in the soil prepared for it, it happened that not even a single blade, I do not speak of ears of corn, sprouted from it unto the time of summer. Wherefore, on the brethren visiting him according to their custom, he ordered some barley to be brought, to see whether the nature of the soil or the will of the heavenly Giver should be more favourable to the growth of a crop of that grain there. When it was brought him, he sowed it in the same field long after the time of sowing, and beyond all hope of its bearing fruit; and presently a plentiful crop came up and afforded the man of God the sustenance which he had desired to obtain by his own labour.

When, therefore, he had served God in that place many years in solitude—now the height of the mound with which his abode was enclosed was so great that from it he could only see heaven, into which he ardently desired to enter—

de foris altior longitudine stantis hominis; nam intrinsecus vivam cædendo rupem multo illam fecit altiore, quatenus ad cohibendam oculorum simul et cogitatum lasciviam, ad erigendam in superna desideria totam mentis intentionem, pius incola nil de sua mansione præter cælum posset intueri.

Life of Cuthbert, ch. xvii.

it happened that a great synod having been assembled in the presence of King Ecgfrid, near the river Alne, in a place which is called Adtuifyrði¹, which signifies 'at the two fords,' over which Theodore of blessed memory presided, he was elected, with one mind and consent of all, to the episcopate of the Church of Lindisfarne. And when, many deputations and letters having been sent to him, he could by no means be prevailed upon to quit his monastery, at length the aforesaid king himself, with the most holy prelate Trumwine, and other religious and powerful men, went by ship to the island. And many of the brethren from the island itself of Lindisfarne meet together for the same purpose, they all kneel down, they adjure him by the Lord, they shed tears, they implore him, until they draw him forth, himself also shedding kindly tears, from his retreat, and take him to the synod. Whither when he arrived, although very reluctant, he is overcome by the unanimous wish of all, and is obliged to submit to undertake the office of the episcopate, being chiefly prevailed on by the saying that Boisil, the servant of the Lord, when with prophetic mind he revealed all things that were to happen to him, had predicted² also that he should be a bishop. His ordination, however, was not immediately decreed; but when the winter, which was then at hand, was past, it was performed at the time of the paschal solemnity³ at York, in the presence of the aforesaid King Ecgfrid, seven bishops meeting at his consecration, among whom Theodore,

¹ Twyford, in Northumberland. The synod was held A.D. 684. Saxon Chronicle.

² Life of Cuthbert, ch. viii.

³ A.D. 685. Florence.

of blessed memory, was primate¹. Moreover; he was first elected to the episcopate of the Church of Hagustald, in the place of Tunberct², who had been deposed from the bishopric; but since he preferred to be set over the Church of Lindisfarne, in which he had lived, it was determined that Eata should return to the see of the Church of Hagustald, to rule which he had been at first ordained, and that Cudberct should take upon him the government of the Church of Lindisfarne.

Having received the grade of the episcopate, he adorned it by works of virtues, in imitation of the blessed apostles; for he both protected by his constant prayers the people committed to his charge, and called them to heavenly things by most wholesome admonitions. And, what is the greatest help to teachers, he himself by doing first what he taught was to be done, set an example to others. For he was most especially inflamed with the fire of divine charity, modest by the virtue of patience, most diligently intent on devout prayers, and affable to all who came to him for comfort, since he considered that if he afforded the infirm brethren the help of his exhortation, this itself was an equivalent to prayer, knowing that He who said, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,' said also, 'Thou shalt love thy

¹ 'Rex Ecgfridus et Theodorus archiepiscopus dederunt S. Cudbercto in civitate Eburaca totam terram a muro ecclesiæ usque magnam portam versus occidentem, et a muro ipsius ecclesiæ usque murum civitatis versus austrum.' Sim. Dunelm, Hist. Dun. Eccles. i. 9.

² Tunberct was consecrated A.D. 681, on which occasion it was settled that Eata, who had been made bishop of the Churches of Hagustald and Lindisfarne, A.D. 677, should give up the charge of the former Church and superintend the latter only. See Chap. xii.

neighbour.' He was remarkable for the chastening of himself by abstinence, and by the grace of compunction he was always kept intent on heavenly things. In short, when he offered to God the sacrifice of the saving victim, he commended his vows to his Lord, not by a voice raised high, but by tears poured forth from his inmost heart.

Moreover¹, having passed two years in the episcopate, he returned to the island and his monastery, being admonished by a Divine oracle that the day of his death, or rather of his entrance into that life which alone is to be called life, was now drawing near, as he himself also at the same time revealed to some persons, with his usual simplicity, though in words that were rather obscure, but which nevertheless afterwards were clearly understood; moreover, to certain others he even declared the same thing openly.

CHAPTER XXIX².

How the same, when now a bishop, predicted that his own decease was very near at hand, to Hereberct the anchorite.

THERE was a presbyter of venerable life, by name Hereberct, who had long been joined to the man of God in the league of spiritual friendship; who, leading a solitary life in the island of the great lake³ from which the river Derwent

¹ In the Moore MS. Chap. xxix. here begins.

² This chapter is an extract from Bede's Life of Cuthbert.

³ Keswick Lake, or Derwentwater. The island is still called St. Herbert's. Thomas Appleby, bishop of Carlisle, A.D. 1374, gave an indulgence of forty days to pilgrims who visited it.

takes its rise, was wont to visit him every year, and to hear from him monitions of eternal salvation. When this man heard that he was come to the city of Lugubalia¹, he came according to his custom, desiring to become more and more inflamed with the desire of heavenly things by his wholesome exhortations. And while they were alternately regaling one another with the draughts of eternal life, the prelate, among other things, said, 'Remember, brother Hereberct, to ask me now whatever you have need to ask and to speak about with me, for after we shall have departed from each other, we shall never any more behold one another with the bodily eye in this world. For I am certain that the time of my dissolution is at hand, and that the laying aside of my tabernacle will be soon.' And he, hearing these things, threw himself at his feet, sighing and shedding tears, and said, 'I beseech you, by the Lord, desert me not, but be mindful of your most faithful companion, and entreat the Supreme Goodness, that we may together pass away to heaven, to see His grace whom we have together served on earth. For you know

¹ Carlisle. Cuthbert's business there was to ordain some priests. Life of Cuthbert, ch. xxviii. He had been there the year before, A.D. 685, to warn the Queen Ermenburgh of Ecgfrid's death, which he had predicted, and which happened May 20, while he was there. (Moberly.) King Ecgfrid, in the presence of Archbishop Theodore, gave St. Cuthbert, 'villam Crecam, et tria in circuitu ipsius villæ milliaria, ut haberet Eboracum iens vel rediens, mansionem ubi quiescere posset : ubi monachorum habitationem instituit. Et quia illa terra minus sufficiens erat, Lugubaliā, quæ Luel vocatur, in circuitu quindecim milliaria habentem in augmentum suscepit : ubi etiam sanctorum congregatione stabilita, reginam dato habitu religionis consecravit, et in profectum divinæ servitutis scholas instituit. Aliæ quoque terrarum possessiones ei donatæ sunt, quas hic longum est et non necessarium ponere : scriptæ sunt in cartulis ecclesiæ.' Sim. Dun. i. 9.

that I have always endeavoured to live at the bidding of your mouth, and have no less taken care forthwith to correct, at the discretion of your will, whatever I have done wrong through ignorance or frailty.' The prelate betook himself to earnest prayer, and having presently had intimation in the spirit that he had obtained what he asked of the Lord, he said, 'Rise, my brother, and do not lament, but rejoice with great joy, because the heavenly clemency has granted us what we asked.

The subsequent event of things established the truth of this promise and prophecy, for when they had parted from each other they never again saw one another in the body; but their souls quitting the body on one and the same day, that is, on the thirteenth of the Kalends of April¹, their spirits were presently united in participation of the beatific vision, and were alike translated by the ministry of angels to the celestial kingdom. But Hereberct is first chastened by a long sickness, through a dispensation of the Lord's goodness, as is to be believed, in order that, if there was any deficiency in the merit afforded him by the blessed Cudberct, the chastening pain of a long sickness might supply this; to the end that, being made equal in grace to his intercessor, as he had the privilege granted him to depart at one and the same time with him from the body, so also he might be received in one and the same abode of eternal bliss.

Moreover, the most reverend father died in the isle of Farne. He had greatly entreated the brethren that he might also there be buried, where for no short time he had warred for the Lord. But at length, being overcome by their prayers, he gave his consent that he should be carried back to the

¹ May 20.

Marl

isle of Lindisfarne, and be buried in the church. When this took place, the venerable prelate Wilfrid held the episcopate of that church one year, until one was chosen to be ordained bishop in the place of Cudberct.

Moreover, after this, Eadberct was ordained, a man remarkable for his knowledge of the Divine Scriptures, and also for his observance of the heavenly precepts, but most of all for his alms-deeds, so that, according to the law, he not only gave yearly a tenth part of his four-footed beasts, but also of all his grain and fruits, and even also of his garments, to the poor.

CHAPTER XXX.

How his body, after it had been buried eleven years, was found free from corruption; and how his successor in the episcopate was translated from this world not long after.

MOREOVER, Divine Providence being willing to show more fully in how great glory the man of God Cudberct lived after his death, whose sublime life before his death was also made manifest by frequent tokens of miracles, when eleven years had passed from the time of his sepulture, put it into the minds of the brethren to take up his bones, which they thought to find bare and dry, as is usual with the dead, the rest of the body having been already consumed and turned again to dust; intending to put them in a new coffin, and place them, indeed, on the same spot, but above the pavement, on account of the reverence due to him. When they had told Eadberct, their prelate, that such was their intention, he assented to their design, and ordered them to remember to

do this on the anniversary of his burial. Moreover, they did so; and opening the sepulchre, found all the body entire, as though it was still alive, and with the joints of the members flexible, much more like one asleep than one dead. Besides, all the vestments in which the body had been wrapped appeared not only undefiled, but even wonderful for their original freshness and brightness. Which when the brethren saw, being presently struck with very great fear, they hastened to tell the prelate what they had found; who then, by chance, was abiding in solitude in a place rather remote from the church, and encompassed on every side by the flowing waves of the sea. For, indeed, in this place he was wont always to pass the season of Lent; in this place to pass the forty days before the Lord's natal day, in great devotion of continence, prayer, and tears; in which place also his venerable predecessor Cudberct for some time in secret warred for the Lord before he went to the isle of Farne.

Moreover, they also brought to him part of the vestments which had enwrapped the sacred body; which presents when he had thankfully received, and gladly listened to the miracles,—for with wonderful affection he even kissed those vestments, as though they yet covered the father's body,—he said, 'Put new vestments on the body, in the place of these which you have brought, and so put it in the coffin that you have provided. Moreover, I know most certainly that the place will not long remain empty, which has been hallowed with so great grace of a heavenly miracle; and how blest he is, on whom the Lord, the author and giver of all bliss, shall deign to bestow the privilege of resting in it.' When the prelate had finished saying these things, and more of the same kind, with many

tears, his voice even faltering through his great emotion, the brethren did as he had ordered, and when they had wrapped the body in a new vestment, and placed it in a new coffin, they laid it upon the pavement of the sanctuary. And soon after, the prelate Eadberct, beloved by God, was attacked by a sharp disease, and the violence of his sickness increasing daily, and weighing heavily upon him, not long after, that is, on the day before the Nones of May¹, he himself also departed to the Lord, and they laid his body in the sepulchre of the blessed father Cudberct, placing above it the coffin in which they had deposited the uncorrupted limbs of the same father. In which place also the miracles of healings sometimes wrought, gave testimony to the merits of them both; some of which I formerly committed to remembrance in the book of his Life. Besides, I have thought fit to add in this History some also that I happened to hear of lately.

CHAPTER XXXI.

How a certain person was healed of the palsy at his tomb.

THERE was in the same monastery a certain brother, by name Badudegn², who had for no short time served in attendance on the guests, and who is even still living, having the testimony of all the brethren, and of all the guests who came thither, that he was a man of much piety and religion, and served the office assigned him only for the sake of an

¹ May 6.

² Variouslly, Bedduthegn, Baduthegn. Beadothegn, Saxon Version. Beado, or beadu, signifies 'war.' Thegn signifies 'a servant.'

eternal reward. When one day he had washed in the sea the tunics or cloaks which he used in the guest-chamber, on his returning homeward he was attacked, in the middle of the way, by a sudden illness, so that after falling along the ground and lying for some time on his face, he with difficulty at length arose. Moreover, on arising, he perceived that half of his body, from the head to the feet, was affected by the numbness of paralysis, and with the greatest difficulty, leaning on a staff, he reached home. His disorder increased by degrees, and the next night became more serious, so that, on the return of day, he was scarcely able to get up or to walk by himself. Being affected by this ailment, he thought of a most advantageous plan, which was, to go to the church, in the best way he could, and approach the tomb of the most reverend father Cudberct, and there suppliantly on his bended knees, entreat the Divine goodness either that he might even be delivered from that disorder, if this were for his good; or, if it behoved that he should be chastened longer by such an affliction, by the appointment of Divine Providence, that he might bear with patience and a composed mind the pain inflicted on him. He did, therefore, as he had disposed in his mind, and supporting his imbecile limbs on a staff, entered the church, and prostrating himself with pious devotion before the body of the man of God, prayed that through his intercession the Lord would be propitious to him; and during his prayers he seemed as though he were fallen into a sleep, and felt, as he himself afterwards was wont to relate, as though a large and broad hand touched his head, in the part where he suffered pain, and with the same touch passed over, even to the feet, the whole

of that part of his body which had been affected with the numbness, while by degrees the pain departed, and soundness returned. This having taken place, he presently awoke, and rose up perfectly well, and giving thanks to the Lord for his soundness, he showed the brethren what had happened to him; and, all rejoicing with him, he returned as though more chastened by the correcting rod, to the service which he was wont before so carefully to perform.

Furthermore, the garments also with which they had clothed the body of Cudberct, dedicated to God, either whilst alive or when dead, were not destitute of the same grace of healing, as any one will find who reads in the volume of his life and virtues.

CHAPTER XXXII.

How another person was lately cured, at his relics, of an ailment of the eye.

NOR must that be passed over in silence which was done three years ago by his relics, and which was lately made known to me by the very brother on whom it took place. Moreover, it was done in the monastery which being built near the river Dacore¹, took its name from it; over which Suidberct², a religious man, then presided, with the authority

¹ A small stream which runs into the river Eumont, which itself flows out of Ulleswater, and divides Cumberland from Westmoreland. Upon its bank is Dacre Castle, which belonged to the family of that name. Dacore, now Dacre, Camden, p. 1019.

² Not to be confounded with Suidberct, bishop of Verulam. See Bk. V. Chap. xi.

of abbot. There was in it a certain youth, whose eyelid had been disfigured by an unsightly tumour; which when it increased daily, and threatened the loss of the eye, the physicians tried to reduce by applying emollients¹, but without success. Some said that it ought to be cut off, others forbade this to be done, for fear of a greater misfortune. And when, for no short time, the aforesaid brother had suffered from this complaint, and the hand of man could not avert the threatened loss of his eye, or prevent the malady from increasing daily, it happened that he was suddenly healed by the grace of Divine goodness, through the relics of the most holy father Cudberct. For when the brethren found his body uncorrupted after it had been buried many years, they took part of his hair, which they might give, after the manner of relics, to friends who asked for it, or exhibit in testimony of the miracle.

A certain one of the presbyters of the same monastery, named Thruidred, who is now abbot of that very monastery, had at that time in his possession a small portion of these relics. And when one day he had gone into the church, and had opened the repository of relics, that he might give some portion of them to a friend who had asked him, it happened that the young man whose eye was diseased, was also then present in the church. And when the presbyter had given to his friend as large a portion as he thought fit, he gave the rest to the young man to put it back in its proper place. But he, being admonished by some salutary impulse, when he had received the hair of the holy head, applied it to his diseased eyelid, and endeavoured for some

¹ pigmentorum fomentis.

time to compress and soften that virulent tumour by the application of it. Having done this, he again laid up the relics, as he had been ordered, in their proper repository, believing that his eye would quickly be cured by the hair of the man of God, by which it had been touched. Nor did his belief deceive him. It was then, as he was wont to relate, about the second hour of the day. And while he was thinking about, or doing other things which were requisite to be done that day, at the approach of the sixth hour of the same day, on suddenly touching his eye, he found it and the eyelid as sound as if no deformity or tumour had ever appeared on it.

BOOK V.

CHAPTER I.

How Oidilwald, the successor of Cudberct in the anchoretic life, calmed a tempest by prayer, when the brethren were in distress at sea.

MOREOVER, the venerable man Oidilwald¹ succeeded the man of God Cudberct in the exercise of a solitary life, which he passed in the island of Farne, before the time of his episcopate, and for many years in the monastery which is called Inhrypum², he consecrated the office of the priesthood, which he had received, by actions worthy of that degree. In order that the character of his merit and life may be more clearly manifest, I relate one of his miracles, which one of the brethren, on whose account and on whom it was wrought, himself related to me, to wit, Gudfrid, a venerable servant and presbyter of Christ, who also after-

¹ He succeeded Cuthbert in his solitary life A.D. 687, and died in the year 699. In the Martyrologies he is commemorated on March 23. He is called Ædiluuald by Simeon of Durham, Æthelward by Florence; Æthelwold, Saxon Version.

² Cf. Bk. III. Chap. xxv.

wards presided with the authority of abbot over the brethren in the same church of Lindisfarne in which he was brought up. 'I came,' he said, 'with two other brethren, to the isle of Farne, desiring to speak with the most reverend father Oidilwald; and as we were returning home, after having been refreshed by his discourse, and by his benediction which we asked for, behold, suddenly, when we were in the midst of the sea, the calm in which we were voyaging was interrupted, and so great and furious a storm of tempest rushed down on us, that we could make use of neither sail nor oar, and could look for nothing but death. And when, after contending greatly with the wind and sea for a long while in vain, we at length looked behind us, if perchance we could by any effort but regain the island from which we had set out, we found ourselves on every side precluded by a like tempest, and that we had, in ourselves, no hope left us of safety. Moreover, when we lifted up our sight afar off, we saw, in that island of Farne, the father, most beloved of God, Oidilwald, who had come forth from his retreat to observe our course. For, having heard the noise of the storm and of the raging ocean, he had come out to see how we should fare. And when he beheld us in a state of distress and despair, he bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, to pray for our life and safety. And as soon as he had finished his prayer, the swollen waters became appeased, so that the fury of the tempest entirely ceasing, favourable winds attended us along the smooth surface of the sea, even unto the land. And when, on going forth to land, we brought out our little vessel also from the waves, presently the same tempest, which had been for a short time

lulled for our sake, returned, and ceased not to rage greatly during the whole of that day; which gave us plainly to understand, that the brief interval of calm which had taken place was granted by heaven at the prayers of the man of God for our deliverance.

Moreover, the same man of God remained in the island of Farne twelve years, and there died, but was buried in the island of Lindisfarne, near the bodies of the aforesaid bishops, in the church of the blessed apostle Peter. These things, indeed, took place in the time of King Aldfrid, who, after his brother Ecgfrid¹, ruled over the nation of the Northumbrians nineteen years.

CHAPTER II.

How Bishop John cured a dumb and leprous man by his blessing.

IN the beginning² of whose reign, Bishop Eata having died, John³, a holy man, received the prelacy of the Church of Hagustald, concerning whom those who familiarly knew him are wont to relate many miracles of virtues, and especially a most reverend and truthful man, Bercthun, formerly his deacon, but now abbot of the monastery which is called

¹ Ecgfrid died May 20, A.D. 685.

² John I. succeeded to the see of Hexham A.D. 685. Saxon Chronicle.

³ St. John of Beverley. His life and miracles are detailed by Folchard, a monk of Canterbury. Acta SS. Mai. ii. p. 168. He succeeded Eata in the bishopric of Hexham, and was translated to York on Bosa's death, A.D. 705. See Chap. iii.

Inderauuda¹, that is, 'In the wood of the Deri;' some of which I have judged it profitable to hand down to remembrance. There is a certain retired lodge², surrounded by a belt of wood and a palisade, not far from the church of Hagustald, that is, about the distance of a mile and a half, being separated by the river Tyne flowing between, and having a cemetery dedicated to the holy archangel Michael; in which lodge the man of God, when he had opportunity, and especially during Lent, had been accustomed often to reside with a few companions, and in quiet to give attention to prayer and reading. And once when, at the beginning of Lent, he came thither to abide, he ordered his people to seek out some poor man burdened with unusually great infirmity or poverty, whom they might have with them during those days, for the exercise of almsdeeds, for so he was always wont to do.

Moreover, there was in a farmhouse situate not far off, a certain dumb youth, who was known to the bishop, for he had been wont frequently to come into his presence to receive alms, but had never been able to speak a single word; and, besides, had so much scurf and scab on his head, that no hair could ever grow on the top of his head, but only some bristling locks were seen standing out round about it. This person, therefore, the bishop ordered to be brought to him,

¹ Afterwards called Beverley. 'Deirewald, locus nemorosus, i. e. *silva* Deirorum postea Beverlac.' Leland. Deira was also called Dera, and Deora.

² This 'mansio,' with its oratory and burial-place, was situate on an eminence on the left bank of the river Tyne, named Erneshow, i. e. 'The Eagle's Mount.' Richard of Hexham, ap. X. Script. Col. p. 291.

and a small hut to be made for him within the enclosures of the same lodge, in which he might abide and receive a daily allowance from them. And when one week of Lent was ended, on the following Lord's day he ordered the poor man to come into his presence; and when he had come in, he told him to put forth his tongue from his mouth, and show it to him; then, taking him by the chin, he made the sign of the holy cross on his tongue, and having signed it, he told him to draw it back into his mouth, and to speak, saying, 'Pronounce some word; say "Gæ¹,"' which in the tongue of the Angles is a word of affirming and consenting, that is, 'Yes.' He immediately said, the string of his tongue being loosed, what he was ordered. The bishop then added the names of letters: 'say A;' he said 'A;' 'say B,' and he said this also. And when he had said after the bishop the names of each of the letters, the latter proceeded to put syllables also, and words to him to say. And when he had repeated all these properly, he directed him to say whole sentences, and he did so; nor, after this, did he cease during the whole of that day, and the next night, as long as he could keep awake, as those relate who were present, to say something, and to reveal to others the secrets of his thought and will, which he never could do before; after the similitude of him who, having been for a long time lame, on being cured by the apostles Peter and John, leaping up stood and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising the Lord, to wit, rejoicing to have the

¹ i. e. 'yea.' Hussey remarks that with the Anglo-Saxons the letter *g* must have been pronounced like *y*; e. g. Cerotesig, which Bede calls Cerotesey; Mageo, Mayo; Elge, Ely.

use of his feet, which he had for so long a time wanted. The bishop, rejoicing at his recovery of speech, likewise ordered a physician to pay attention to the healing of the scabbiness of his head. He did as he had ordered, and with the help of the prelate's benediction and prayers, a beautiful kind of hair sprung up, at the same time that his skin was healed, and the youth became of a clear countenance, ready in speech, and with hair most beautifully wavy; whereas he had before been uncomely, poor, and dumb. And then being delighted at the recovery of his health, although the bishop gave him the option of taking a situation in his own household, he chose rather to return to his home.

CHAPTER III.

How he healed a sick girl by his prayers.

THE same Bercthun related also another miracle of the aforesaid bishop; that when the most reverend man Wilfrid, after a long exile, was admitted to the episcopate of the church of Hagustald, and the same John, on the death of Bosa¹, a man of great sanctity and humility, was in his stead appointed bishop of York, he himself came, on a certain time, to a monastery of virgins, in a place which is called Vetadun²,

¹ Florence puts the death of Bosa, bishop of York, and of John's translation from the see of Hexham to that of York, in A. D. 686. Therefore the events narrated in this chapter did not take place before that year. (Hussey.)

² 'Wetadun,' Saxon version. Now Watton, i. e. Wet Town, in the eastern part of Yorkshire.

over which the abbess Heriburg then presided. ‘When we had come,’ said he, ‘and were received with great joy of all, the abbess told us that one of the number of the virgins, who was her own daughter in the flesh, was suffering from a very severe illness, inasmuch as she had been lately bled in the arm, and, while she was engaged in study, was seized with an attack of sudden pain, which presently increasing, the arm that had been punctured became worse, and was so much swollen that it could scarcely be spanned by both hands; and she herself, lying on a bed, by reason of the excess of her pain, seemed already about to die. The abbess then asked the bishop that he would deign to go in and give her his benediction, because she believed that at his benediction, or even at his touch, she would presently become better. But on his enquiring when the maiden was bled, and being told that it was on the fourth day of the moon, he said, “You have acted very unwisely and unskillfully in bleeding on the fourth day of the moon; for I remember that Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, said that bleeding at that time was very dangerous, when both the light of the moon and the tide of the ocean are in their increase. And what can I do for the girl if she is at death’s door?” But the abbess entreating him more pressingly for her daughter, whom she dearly loved, and moreover had designed to make abbess in her stead, at length prevailed upon him to go in to the sick girl. He accordingly went in, taking me with him, to the virgin, who was lying, as I said, oppressed with much pain, and with her arm so much swollen that it had no flexure at all at the elbow; and standing by her side, he said a prayer over her, and having

given her his blessing, went out. And when, after this, we were sitting at table at the usual hour, some one coming in, called for me to come out, and said, "Quoenburg," for that was the virgin's name, "desires that you will immediately go back to her." When I had so done, on entering in I found her more cheerful in countenance, and as if resembling a person in health. And while I was sitting by her she said, "Would you like me to call for something to drink?" and I said "Yes, and I am very glad if you can." And when a cup was brought, and we had both drunk, she began to say to me, "From the time the bishop went out, after he had ended his prayer for me, and his benediction, I immediately began to feel better; and although I have not as yet recovered my former strength, yet all the pain has entirely gone, both from the arm, where it was most violent, and from the whole of my body, as if the bishop himself had carried it out with him, although the swelling of my arm still appears to remain." Moreover, on our departing thence, the disappearance of the dreadful tumour forthwith followed the departure of the pain in the limbs; and the virgin, being delivered from death and pains, gave thanks to the Lord the Saviour, together with the rest of His servants who were there.'

CHAPTER IV.

How he cured by holy water the sick wife of an earl.

THE same abbot related to me another miracle also of the aforesaid prelate, not much unlike the former, saying: 'The

country house¹ of a certain earl, who was called Puch, was not far from our monastery, that is, about the space of two miles distant, whose wife had been afflicted with a very severe illness about forty days, so that for three weeks she could not be carried out of doors from the chamber where she lay. Now it happened that the man of God was at that time invited thither by the same earl to consecrate a church. And when the church had been consecrated, the earl asked him to come to his house to dine. The bishop declined the invitation, saying that he must return to the monastery, which was very near. But the earl more earnestly pressing his request, vowed also to give alms to the poor, if only he would deign on that day to enter into his house and break his fast. And I together with him made entreaty, promising that I also would give alms for the relief of the poor if he would go and dine at the house of the earl, and bestow his blessing. And when, after some time, we had with difficulty obtained this request, we went in to refresh ourselves. Now, the bishop had sent to the woman who was lying sick some of the holy water which he had consecrated for the dedication of the church, by one of the brothers who had come with me, ordering him to give it to her to sip, and where-soever he was told that she had the pain greatest to wash her with some of the same water. This having been done, the woman immediately rose up whole, and perceiving that she was not only freed from her long illness, but had also recovered her strength, which she had for a long time lost,

¹ South Burton, Yorkshire, two miles from Beverley. The daughter of this earl became a nun at Beverley, to which monastery he also gave the manor of Walkington. *Monast. Angl.* i. p. 170.

she brought the cup to the bishop and to us, and continued, as she had begun, to serve us all with drink, until the dinner was ended, following the example of the blessed Peter's mother-in-law, who, after her strength had been reduced by the burning heat of a fever, arose at the touch of the Lord's hand, and having recovered both her health and strength, ministered to them.'

CHAPTER V.

How he also, by praying, recovered from death the page of an earl.

ALSO, at another time, having been called to consecrate the church of an earl, by name Addi¹, when he had performed the service required, he was asked by the same earl to go in to one of his pages, who was suffering from a very severe illness, insomuch that, having lost all use of his limbs, he seemed just about to die ; and a coffin had even been already prepared to put him in when dead. Moreover, the earl joined even tears to his entreaties, earnestly beseeching him that he would go in and pray for him, because his life was of great consequence to the earl himself ; he believed indeed, that if the bishop would lay his hand on him and bless him, he would immediately become better. The bishop, therefore, went in thither, and saw him, to the grief of all, already

¹ The earl, or thane, of North Burton, in Yorkshire. He gave this 'villa,' together with the advowson, to the church of Beverley. Monast. Angl. p. 170.

at the point of death, and the coffin placed near him, in which he was to be laid for burial. He said a prayer and blessed him, and on going out said in the customary language of those who offer consolation, ‘ May you soon become quite well.’ Afterwards, when they were sitting at table, the page sent to his master to ask him to send him a cup of wine, because he was thirsty. The earl, being very glad that he could drink, sent him a cup of wine blessed by the bishop, which when he had drunk, he arose immediately, and having shaken off the lethargy of his illness, he clothed himself in his garments, and going out thence, went in and saluted the bishop and the guests, saying that he also would be glad to eat and drink with them. They bade him sit down with them at the banquet, greatly rejoicing at his recovery. He sat down, ate, drank, and was merry; he behaved as one of the guests; and living many years after, continued in the same health that he had regained. Moreover, the aforesaid abbot says that this miracle was not wrought when he himself was present, but that it was related to him by those who were present.

CHAPTER VI.

How, by his prayers and benediction, he recovered from death one of his clergy who had been bruised by a fall.

NOR do I think that the miracle is to be passed over in silence, which the servant of Christ, Herebald, is wont to relate as having been wrought by him upon himself, who,

at that time, indeed, was living in the number of his clergy, but now presides, with the authority of abbot, over the monastery which is near the mouth of the river Tyne. He said, 'Being present and very well acquainted with his course of life, I found it in all respects, as far as it is lawful for man to judge, worthy of a bishop. But how great his merit was accounted by the inward Judge, I have experienced, both in the case of many others, and chiefly in my own, as having been recalled, so to speak, from the very bourne of death, and brought back to the way of life by his prayer and benediction. For when, in the prime of my youth, I was living among his clergy, applying myself to the studies of reading and singing, but not as yet having entirely withdrawn my mind from juvenile amusements, it happened one day that as we were travelling with him, we came to a smooth and wide road, well adapted for gallopping our horses; and the youths who were with him, being principally of the laity, began to entreat the bishop that he would allow them to try in turn their horses at a gallop. He at first refused, saying that it was an idle request; but at last, being overcome by the unanimous entreaty of many, "Do it," said he, "if you wish, provided, however, that Herebald keeps himself entirely out of the contest." Furthermore, I myself entreated him earnestly that I also might have leave given me to contend with them, for I had confidence in a very excellent horse which he himself had given me; but I could not obtain my request. And when they had several times gallopped their horses forward and backward, the bishop and myself looking on, I also, being overcome by my wanton disposition, could not refrain myself, but although he forbade me, I joined

them in their game, and began to contend with them in galloping my horse. While I was doing this, I heard him behind me, saying to me with a lamentable voice, "Oh how much you grieve me by riding in that way!" And although I heard him, I not the less persisted in the forbidden amusement. Soon after, when the fiery horse was leaping over a certain hollow place in the way with great impetuosity, I slipped from my seat and fell, and presently, just like one dying, lost my senses entirely, and all power of motion. For there was in that place a stone level with the earth, and covered with thin turf; nor could another such stone be found on the whole expanse of that plain; and it happened by chance, or rather by Divine providence, for the punishment of my fault of disobedience, that I struck this stone with my head and my hand, which in falling I had put under my head, and broke my thumb, and also fractured my skull; and, as I said, became very like one dead. And because I could not be moved, they spread a tent there for me to lie in. Moreover, it was about the seventh hour of the day, from which time I remained quite still unto the evening, and as though dead; then I revive a little, and am carried home by my companions, and continue speechless the whole night. Moreover, I vomited blood, inasmuch as my inward parts also were ruptured by the fall. The bishop grieved very much for my fall and dangerous injury, inasmuch as he loved me with special affection, and he would not on that night stay, according to his custom, with his clergy, but, abiding alone, passed the night in prayer and watching, supplicating the Supreme Goodness, as I believe, for my recovery. And at daybreak, having come in to me, and said a prayer

over me, he called me by my name, and asked me, as though awaking me from a heavy sleep, if I knew who it was that spoke to me; and I, opening my eyes, say "Yes, you are my beloved bishop." "Can you live?" said he; and I said, "I can, through your prayers, if it please the Lord." And he, having placed his hand upon my head, and pronounced words of benediction, betook himself again to prayer; and after a very little while, on revisiting me, he found me sitting up, and now able to talk; and, being admonished, as it presently appeared, by Divine inspiration, he began to ask me whether I knew for certain that I had been baptized; and I answered him that I undoubtedly knew that I had been washed in the font of salvation for the remission of my sins; and I told him the name of the presbyter by whom I knew that I had been baptized. Then he said, "If you were baptized by that priest, you are not perfectly baptized; for I knew him, and know that after he had been ordained priest, he could not, on account of the dulness of his understanding, learn the office of catechizing or baptizing, for which reason I myself enjoined him entirely to desist from undertaking this office, which he was unable duly to perform." Having said this, he undertook to catechize me himself at that same time; and it came to pass that, on his breathing¹ in my face, I presently felt myself better. Moreover, he called a physician, and charged him to set and bandage my fractured skull. And presently, when I had received his benediction, I became so much better, that on the morrow I mounted a horse and travelled with him to

¹ The 'exsufflatio' was one of the ceremonies before baptism. Cyril of Jerusalem makes mention of it as τὸ ἀπλοῦν ἐμφύσημα τοῦ ἐπορκίζοντος, Catech. xvi. 19.

another place; and not long after, being quite cured, I was also baptized with the life-giving water.'

Moreover, he continued thirty-three years¹ in the episcopate, and then ascended to the celestial kingdom. He was buried in the porch of St. Peter, in his own monastery, which is called 'In the Wood of the Deri,' in the year from the Lord's incarnation 721. For when, by reason of his great age, he became unequal to the functions of the episcopate, he consecrated Wilfrid, his presbyter, bishop of the church of York, and retired to the aforesaid monastery, and there ended his life, in a conversation approved of by God.

CHAPTER VII.

How Cædwalla, king of the West Saxons, went to Rome to be baptized; and, also, how his successor Ini devoutly came to the same courts of the blessed apostles.

MOREOVER, in the third year² of King Aldfrid, Cædwalla, king of the West Saxons³, after he had for two years most energetically ruled his people, left his government for the sake of the Lord and an eternal kingdom, and went to Rome⁴, desiring to obtain for himself the singular glory of

¹ He was made bishop of Hexham A.D. 685. He resigned his bishopric A.D. 718, and died A.D. 721, which year, however, Florence gives as the date of his retirement,

² A.D. 688.

³ Called also Geuissæ. Cerdic's great-grandfather was called Geuisi. Florence, p. 688.

⁴ He is said to have made this pilgrimage in token of penitence for his ravages in Kent and elsewhere. Brompton, X. Script. p. 742. He is said to have granted a charter to Wilfrid, giving him Pægaham, with its appur-

being washed in the baptismal font at the courts of the blessed apostles, having learned that in baptism alone the entrance into celestial life is opened to mankind. At the same time he also hoped that presently, when baptized, he should, being now cleansed, be delivered from the flesh and pass to eternal joys ; both which things, as he had disposed in his mind, were, by the Lord's assistance, fulfilled. For coming thither when Sergius held the pontificate, he was baptized on the holy day of the paschal Sabbath,¹ in the year from the Lord's incarnation 689, and while still clothed in white garments, being seized with an illness, he was released from the flesh on the twelfth day of the Kalends of ² May², and joined to the kingdom of the blessed in heaven. At the time of his baptism the aforesaid pope had also given him the name of Peter, that he might be united, by community of the same name, to the most blessed chief of the apostles, to whose most sacred body he had come, conducted by pious love, from the ends of the earth. He was also buried in his church, and by the pontiff's command an epitaph was written on his monument, in which the memory of his devotion might remain fixed for ages, and might inflame the readers or hearers, by the example of what he had done, to the pursuit of religion. It was written, then, in this fashion :—

‘Grandeur, wealth, offspring, triumphs, kingly might,
War's trophies, nobles, forts, camps, home's delight,

tenances; also another charter to Theodore, and to Christ Church at Canterbury, in the year 687, giving Geddinge and Wiletun. *Evidentiæ Eccl. Christi Cant. X. Script. p. 2207.*

¹ April 10, A.D. 688.9

² April 20th

~~April 20. A.D. 689.~~

All that his sires' or his own prowess reft,
For love of God, the warlike Cædwal left;
Peter to see, and Peter's seat, and gain
His waters pure that cleanse from every stain;
To quaff with dazzling draught the splendid beam,
From which life's rays through all the wide earth stream.
Eager to seize the prize of life renew'd,
The convert changed his barbarism rude,
And his barbaric name. At the desire
Of Sergius, his spiritual sire,
He Peter's name received. Christ's cleansing grace
Gave him, while clothed in white, in heaven a place.
Great this king's faith! the love of Christ how great,
Whose hidden counsel none can penetrate!
Safe came he from the Britons' far abodes,
Through various tribes, o'er various seas, and roads.
He saw, with Peter's mystic gifts endued,
The town of Romulus, her temple viewed.
Now with Christ's sheep he walks in company;
The grave his body hath, his soul the sky.
Be sure he wisely laid his sceptre down,
To gain from Christ an everlasting crown.

Here was laid Cædwal, who is also Peter, a king of the Saxons, on the twelfth day of the Kalends of May, in the second indiction, who lived thirty years, more or less, in the reign of the lord Justinian, the most pious Augustus, in the fourth year of his consulship, and in the second year of the pontificate of that apostolic man, our lord Pope Sergius.'

Moreover, on the departure of Cædwalla for Rome, Ini, of the royal lineage¹, succeeded to the kingdom, and when he had held the government of that nation thirty-seven years, he himself also having left his kingdom, and committed it to

¹ Ina was the son of Cenred, the son of Ceolwald, the son of Cutha (or Cuthwin), the son of Ceawlin. Cædwalla was the son of Cenbyrht, the son of Cada, the son of Cuthwin, the son of Ceawlin. Florence, p. 694.

the charge of younger princes¹, set out for the courts of the blessed apostles, when Gregory held the pontificate, being desirous for a time to live as a pilgrim on earth, in the neighbourhood of the holy places, that so he might deserve to be more familiarly received by the saints in heaven; which same thing, at that time, many of the nation of the Angles, nobles and commons, laymen and clergy, men and women, were wont to vie with one another² in doing.

CHAPTER VIII.

How, when Theodore was dead, Berctwald was raised to the rank of archbishop, and how among very many whom he ordained, he made Tobias, a very learned man, prelate of the church of Rochester.

MOREOVER, in the year after that in which Cædwalla died at Rome, that is, in the year of the Lord's incarnation 690, Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, died, being old and full of days, that is, eighty-eight years of age; which number of years he himself long ago, having learnt it by revelation in a dream, was wont to foretell to his friends that he should live. Moreover, he continued in the episcopate for twenty-two years, and was buried in the church of

¹ To Ethelhard, who in the same year fought with Oswald, a descendant of Ceawlin. Saxon Chronicle, A.D. 728.

² Hædde says that Wilfrid brought this about, and that before his time, 'adhuc inatritam viam genti nostræ.' Vit. Vilfr. 3.

St. Peter, in which the bodies of all the bishops of the church of Canterbury are laid. Concerning whom, together with the partakers of the same dignity with him, it may rightly and truly be said, that their bodies are interred in peace, and their names shall live from generation to generation¹. For, to speak briefly, the Churches of the Angles received such an amount of spiritual improvement in the time of his episcopate², as they never could before. His person, life, age, and death, the epitaph also on his monument describes plainly and lucidly in thirty-four heroic verses, to all that come there; of which the first are these:—

‘Here a most holy prelate rests in peace,
Called Theodorus, in the tongue of Greece.
Who, worthy of the station that he fill’d,
Into his scholars’ minds pure truth instill’d.’

and the last—

‘When now it was September’s nineteenth day,
From fleshly bonds his spirit pass’d away,
And soar’d to find in heaven eternal rest,
And join the holy bands of spirits blest.’

Moreover³, Theodore was succeeded in the episcopate by

¹ Ecclus. xliv. 14.

² ‘Hic excitavit fidelium voluntatem ut in civitatibus et villis ecclesias fabricarentur, parochias distinguerent, et assensus regios his procuravit; ut siqui sufficientes essent super proprium fundum construere ecclesias, earundem perpetuo patronatu gauderent: si inter limites alterius alicujus dominii ecclesias facerent, ejusdem fundi idomini notarentur pro patronis.’ Elmham. This passage is noticeable as showing that the first great step towards the establishment of our church parochial system was made in Theodore’s time.

³ In many MSS. a new chapter begins here. •

Berctwald¹, who was abbot in the monastery which is situated near the north side of the mouth of the river Genlada², and is called Racuulfe³. He was a man well versed in the knowledge of the Scriptures, and also most highly instructed in ecclesiastical as well as monasterial rules, although by no means to be compared with his predecessor. He was elected indeed to the episcopate in the year of the Lord's incarnation 692, on the first day of the month of July, when Victred⁴ and Suæbhard⁵ were reigning in Kent; but he was ordained in the following year, on Sunday, the third day of the Kalends of July⁶, by Godwin⁷, metropolitan bishop of Gaul; and was enthroned on Sunday, the day before the Kalends of September⁸. Among many bishops whom he ordained, he consecrated Tobias, when Gebmund, prelate of the church of Rochester, was dead⁹, in his place, a man instructed in the Latin, Greek, and Saxon tongues, and of much other erudition.

¹ Beorhtwald, Brihtwold, Saxon Chronicle.

² Now the Inlade.

³ The Roman Regulbium. Called by the Saxons Raculf. Now Reculver.

⁴ Victred, or Wihtred, obtained peace with Ina by paying 30,000 marks. He summoned the Council of Baccancelde, A.D. 694, and of Berghamstede, A.D. 696.

⁵ Or Wæbhard. Matthew of Westminster says that he was Victred's brother.

⁶ June 29, 30.

⁷ Guodune, Sax. Chronicle. Archbishop of Lyons, Gall. Christ. iv. 50.

⁸ Aug. 31.

⁹ Florence and others state that Gebmund died in A.D. 693.

CHAPTER IX.

How Ecgberct, a holy man, would have gone into Germany to preach, and could not; furthermore, how Victberct, indeed, went, but meeting with no success, returned again into Ireland, whence he had come.

AT that time, the venerable servant of Christ and priest, Ecgberct, who is to be named with all worship, and who, as I related ¹, lived abroad in the island of Ireland, in order to obtain a country in heaven, purposed in his mind to benefit many; that is, to undertake the work of an apostle, and to commit the Word of God, by the preaching of the Gospel, to some of those nations that had not yet heard it, of whom he knew that there were many nations in Germany, from which the Angles or Saxons, who now inhabit Britain, are known to have derived the origin of their race, on which account they are still corruptly called Garmani by the neighbouring nation of the Britons. Moreover, they are the Fresones ², the Rugini, the Danai, the Hunni, the Old Saxons, and the Boructuari ³. There are very many other peoples in these same parts still serving pagan rites, to whom the aforesaid soldier of Christ purposed to come, by circumnavigating Britain, to try whether he could deliver some of them from Satan, and bring them over to Christ; or if this

¹ See Bk. III. Chap. xxvii.

² Offo, an Angle, preached the Gospel among the Germans, A.D. 603; and Wilfrid, when driven by stress of weather to Fresia, did so, about A.D. 679. See Bk. III. Chap. xxvii.

³ Perhaps, the occupants of a district upon the river Weser, in which locality is a place still called Bruk. (Hussey.)

could not be done, he thought of going to Rome, to see and adore the courts of the blessed apostles and martyrs of Christ.

But Divine oracles as well as agencies opposed his accomplishing any of these designs. For when he had chosen for his companions those who were most strenuous and fit to preach the Word, as being illustrious both for their actions and erudition, and had provided all things that seemed needful for their voyage, there came to him on a certain day, at early morning, one of the brethren, formerly a disciple in Britain, and an attendant on the priest Boisil¹, beloved by God, when the same Boisil was superior of the monastery of Mailros, under the abbot Eata, as I narrated above², to relate to him a vision that had appeared to him in the same night. He said, 'When the matin hymns were ended, and I had laid my limbs on my pallet, and a light sleep had stolen upon me, there appeared to me my old master and most loving foster-father, Boisil, and asked me whether I knew him. I said "Yes, you are Boisil." Then he said, "I came for the purpose of bringing a message from our Lord and Saviour to Ecgberct, which nevertheless must be delivered to him by you. Say, therefore, to him, that he cannot accomplish the voyage which he has purposed; for it is the will of God that he should rather go to instruct the monasteries of Columba. Now Columba³ was the first teacher of the Christian faith to the Picts beyond the mountains towards the north, and the first founder of the monastery in the isle of Hii, which continued for a long time to be

¹ 'Non. 1 Jul. In Britanniis depositio beati Boisili presbyteri et confessoris.' Martyrol. Dunelm. ² Bk. IV. Chap. xxvii. ³ See Bk. III. Chap. iv.

venerated by many peoples of the Scots and Picts. This Columba, to wit, is now called by some by the name of Columcelli, which is compounded of Cella and Columba. Moreover, Ecgberct, on hearing the words of the vision, ordered the brother who had related it not to mention these things to any other person, lest, perhaps, the vision might have been illusory. He, however, considering the matter in silence, feared that it was true; nevertheless, he was unwilling to desist from making preparations for the voyage which he was about to make, in order to visit and instruct the heathen.

But after a few days, the aforesaid brother came again to him, saying, that in that night after matins were ended, Boisil again appeared to him in a vision, and said, ‘Why did you so negligently and coldly tell to Ecgberct what I ordered you to say? But go now, and say to him, that, whether he will or not, he must go to the monasteries of Columba, because their ploughs do not go straight, and it behoves him to bring them back to a straight path.’ And he, on hearing this, again charged the brother to reveal it to no one. He, however, although he had certain information of the vision, endeavoured notwithstanding to commence the intended voyage with the aforesaid brethren. And when they had now put on board the ship those things which the wants of so great a voyage required, and were waiting some days for favourable winds, one night so fierce a tempest arose as to destroy some part of the things that were in the ship, and to leave the ship itself lying upon the shore amid the waves. Nevertheless, all things which belonged to Ecgberct and his companions were saved. Then he, as though

rehearsing that saying of the prophet, 'This tempest is on my account¹,' withdrew himself from that expedition, and endured to remain at home.

However, one of his companions, by name Victberct, who also was remarkable for his contempt of the world and his skill in learning, for he had led an anchoritic life in great perfection abroad in Ireland many years, took ship, and, coming to Friesland, for two successive years preached the word of truth to that nation, and its king Rathbed²; but he did not find any fruit of so great labour among his barbarous hearers. Then returning to the place of his chosen banishment, he began, in his accustomed silence, to give his time to the Lord; and since he had not been able to benefit foreigners with regard to teaching them the faith, his care was to benefit more fully his own people by examples of virtues.

CHAPTER X.

How Vilbrord, preaching in Friesland, converted many to Christ; and how his companions, the Hewalds, suffered martyrdom.

WHEN, moreover, the man of God Ecgeberct saw that neither he himself was permitted to go to preach to the Gentiles,

¹ Jonah i. 12.

² 'Narrat Vincentius in speculo Historiali de prædicto rege Fresonum, quod cum prædicatione Wlfranni episcopi ad hoc inductus esset ut baptizaretur, cum unum pedem in lavacro intinxisset, alterum pedem retrahens interrogavit ubinam plures majorum suorum essent in inferno, an in paradiso: et audiens plures esse in inferno, ait, sanctius est ut plures quam pauciores sequar.' Capgr. in Vita S. Willibrordi.

being withheld for some other work of usefulness to the holy Church, concerning which he had been admonished by the oracle ; and that neither did Victberct, on coming into those parts, meet with any success, he still attempted to send some holy and zealous men for the ministry of the Word, among whom Wilbrord¹ shone pre-eminent for his rank as presbyter, and for his merit². And when they had come thither, being, moreover, twelve in number, they turned aside to Pippin, leader of the Franks, and were graciously received by him ; and because he had lately conquered³ Hither Friesland⁴, having driven thence King Rathbed, he sent them thither to preach ; himself also assisting them with his imperial authority, lest any one should offer any hindrance to their

¹ Wilbrord was born in Northumbria, and educated at Ripon. He left the monastery there, and went to Ireland, to be with Ecgberct. After staying there twelve years, he went to Friesland to preach. He was afterwards made bishop by Pope Sergius, and continued to discharge his episcopal duties until his advanced age induced him to appoint a coadjutor in the episcopate. He is commemorated on November 6.

² A.D. 690. 'S. Willibrordus tunc presbyter, miræque sanctitatis vir Adalbertus confessor, cum aliis 10 ad Pippinum ducem Francorum pervenerunt.' Pertz, *Monumenta Germaniæ Historica*, ii. 220.

³ Adam of Bremen, cited by Einhard, says, 'Thuringi vel Saxones itemque cæteræ quæ juxta Rhenum sunt nationes, ex antiquo Francis tributariæ leguntur. Quibus deinde regno eorum deficientibus Pippinus genitor Caroli bellum intulit, quod tamen filius ejus majori felicitate peregit.' Einhard adds 'bellum cum Saxonibus triginta annos fuisse.' *Hist. Eccles.* i. 7.

⁴ The Annals of Metz relate, 'B. Pipinum ducem seniore avum hujus, populum inter Carbonariam Silvam et Mosam fluvium et usque ad Fresiorum fines vastis limitibus habitantem justis legibus gubernasse.' The Angles would probably have called what is now Holland, 'Citerior Fresia ;' and the Franks have called by this name the country watered by the Meuse and the Waal.

preaching, and exalting with many benefits those who were willing to receive the faith : whence it came to pass, that by the assistance of Divine grace, they in a short time converted many from idolatry to the faith of Christ.

Two presbyters of the nation of the Angles, who for a long time had lived abroad in Ireland, for the sake of the eternal country, following the example of these men, came to the province of the Ancient Saxons, to try whether they could by preaching there bring over some to Christ. They were, moreover, both of the same name, as also of the same zeal ; for each of them was called Hewald, but with this distinction, that, according to the different colour of their hair, the one was called Dark Hewald, the other Light Hewald, each of whom was full of religious piety ; but Dark Hewald was more skilled in the knowledge of sacred literature. On coming into the province, they took lodging with a certain steward, and requested of him that they might be conducted to his superior lord, for that they had a certain message, and something to his advantage, to communicate to him. For these same Ancient Saxons have no king, but many lords set over their nation, who, when a war is about to commence, cast lots impartially, and whomsoever the lot declares, him they all follow as their leader, and obey, during the time of the war ; but when the war is ended, all the lords become again equal in power. The steward, then, received them, and promising to send them to his superior lord, as they requested, kept them with him some days.

And when the barbarians found that they were of another religion, for they were constantly occupied in psalms and prayers, and daily offered to God the sacrifice

of the saving victim, having with them sacred vessels, and a consecrated table in the place of an altar, they looked upon them with suspicion, being afraid that if they came to the lord and talked with him, they would turn him away from his gods and bring him over to the new religion of the Christian faith; and so by degrees the whole of their province would be obliged to change its ancient mode of worship for a new one. Therefore they suddenly seized upon them and slew them; Light Hewald, indeed, by the speedy death of the sword, but Dark Hewald by long and excruciating torture, and the horrible disruption of all his members; and when they had killed them, they threw them into the Rhine. Which when that lord whom they desired to see had heard of, he was very angry, because the strangers were not permitted to come to him, as they wished; and sent and slew all the people of that village, and consumed the village with fire. Moreover, the aforesaid priests and servants of Christ suffered¹ on the fifth day of the Nones of October².

Nor were celestial miracles wanting at their martyrdom; for when their dead bodies had been cast by the pagans into the river, as I said, it happened that they were carried nearly forty miles against the current of the descending stream, even unto those parts where their companions were. Besides, a very great ray of light, reaching as high as heaven, shone every night over the place where-soever it happened that they came; and this even in the sight of the pagans who had killed them. Further, one of

¹ The Gallican Martyrology says that they were put to death in Westphalia. (Smith.)

² October 3.

them appeared in a night vision to one of his companions whose name was Tilmon, an illustrious man, and noble also as pertains to this world, who had become a monk after having been a soldier, declaring that he could find their bodies in the place where he should see the light shining from heaven to earth. Which was fulfilled accordingly. For their bodies were found, and buried with the honour due to martyrs; and the day of their passion, or of the finding of their bodies, is celebrated with suitable veneration in those parts. Lastly, Pippin, the most glorious ruler of the Franks, when he heard of these things, sent for their bodies, and, when they had been brought to him, buried them with much honour, in the church¹ of the city of Colonia², beside the Rhine. Moreover, it is related, that in the place in which they were killed a fountain burst forth, which in the same place unto this day pours forth the copious bounty of its stream.

CHAPTER XI.

How the venerable men, Suidberct³ in Britain, Vilbrord at Rome, were ordained bishops for Fresia.

IN truth, at the first time of their coming into Fresia, presently, when Vilbrord found that license was given him by the prince to preach there, he hastened to go to Rome, over

¹ The collegiate church of St. Cunibert.

² Cologne.

³ His biography is given in the Acta SS. Mart. i. p. 67. Suidbert was consecrated before June 29, A.D. 693. Acta SS. Mart. i. p. 70.

which apostolic see Pope Sergius then presided; that, with his permission and benediction, he might enter upon the desired work of preaching the Gospel to the nations; at the same time hoping also to receive from him relics of the blessed apostles and martyrs of Christ; so that, whilst he was building churches in the nation to which he preached, having destroyed the idols, he might have in readiness relics of the saints, which he might put into them; and when he had so deposited them, might afterwards dedicate each of the several places to the honour of those saints whose relics they were. Besides, he desired also to learn there, or to receive thence, very many other things which the business of so great a work required. In all which things, when he had obtained all that he wished for, he returned to his preaching.

At which time, the brothers who were attending to the ministry of the Word in Friesland, chose of their number Suidberct, a man moderate in his habits, and meek in heart, to be consecrated their prelate, whom, being sent to Britain, the most reverend Bishop Wilfrid ordained at their request; who then, by chance, having been banished from his country¹, was in exile in the regions of the Mercians. For, at that time, Kent had no bishop, Theodore being dead, and Berctwald, his successor, who had gone across the sea to be consecrated, not having returned to the see of his episcopate.

This Suidberct, to wit, having received the episcopate, returned from Britain, and not long after departed to the nation of the Boructuari, and brought many of them into the way of truth by his preaching. But no long time after-

¹ Wilfrid was banished A.D. 691.

wards the Boructuari having been subdued by the nation of the Ancient Saxons, those who had received the Word were dispersed in various parts; the bishop himself, with certain others, went to Pippin, who, at the intercession of his wife Blithryda¹, gave him a place of abode in a certain island of the Rhine, which in their tongue is called On the Shore², in which he himself, having built a monastery, which to this day his successors still hold, led a most continent life for some considerable time, and there died³.

But after they who had gone thither had taught in Friesland for some years, Pippin sent, with the approbation of all, that most reverend man Vilbrord⁴ to Rome, where Sergius still held the pontificate, with the demand that he might be consecrated archbishop for the same nation of the Fresons. This was fulfilled as he had requested, in the year from the Lord's incarnation 696. Moreover, he was ordained in the

¹ Sometimes written Plethrudis or Plectrudis.

² The German name is Werde, now Kaiserwerth, on the Rhine below Cologne.

³ Du Chesne, in his Short Annals of the Franks, has, among the events of A.D. 713, 'depositio (the burial) Suithberthi episcopi.' Suidbert was canonized by Pope Leo III., and is said to have been the first who was thus formally and solemnly enrolled in the number of the saints.

⁴ Vilbrord was an Angle, concerning whom the *Annales Xantenses*, A.D. 690, have these words: 'Sanctus Willibrordus tunc presbyter, miræque sanctitatis vir Adalbertus confessor, cum aliis decem de Britannia gentis Anglorum ob gratiam Evangelii in Gallias transientes (sic) ad Pippinum Francorum ducem pervenerunt.' And A.D. 694, 'Pippinus dux Rathbodum ducem Fresonum bellando vicit, Fresiamque sibi subjugavit, et sanctum Willibrordum, a beato Sergio papa archiepiscopum consecratum, illuc ad prædicandum verbum Dei direxit. Sanctus vero Adalbertus in loco qui dicitur Ekmunda usque ad tempus exitus sui apud quendam Eggonem mansit, et plurimorum corda ad fidei salutem erexit.' Pertz, *Monum. German. Hist.* vol. ii. p. 220.

church of the holy martyr Cecilia¹, on her natal day, the name of Clement being given him by the aforesaid pope; and afterwards he was sent back to the see of his episcopate, that is, fourteen days after he had come to the city.

Moreover, Pippin gave him a place for his episcopal see, in his famous fortified town, which is called by an ancient appellation of those nations Viltaburg, that is, the Town of the Vilti, but in the Gallic tongue, Trajectum²; and when a church³ had been built there, the most reverend prelate, preaching far and wide the word of faith, and recovering many from error, afterwards built many churches in those regions, and also some monasteries. For not long after he himself appointed other bishops also in those regions, out of the number of those brethren who, either with him or after him, had come thither to preach; of whom some are now fallen asleep in the Lord. Vilbrord, however, himself, surnamed Clement, is still living⁴, being now venerable by reason of his extreme old age, to wit, being in the thirty-sixth year of his episcopate, and, after manifold conflicts of heavenly warfare, sighing with his whole mind for the rewards of a heavenly recompense.

¹ Stevenson suggests that 'ejus' here may relate to Vilbrord and not S. Cæcilia, whose natal day is November 22, which in A.D. 696 was not a Sunday, the usual day for the consecration of bishops.

² Bede is supposed to be mistaken in making Viltaberg identical with Utrecht. The modern Wiltberg is in Brandenburg, at a considerable distance from the scene of Wilbrord's labours.

³ The church of St. Saviour. He also built the church of St. Martin, Boniface, Ep. 105.

⁴ A.D. 731.

CHAPTER XII.

How a certain person in the province of the Northumbrians, arising from the dead, related many things, both fearful and desirable, which he had seen.

AT this time¹, a memorable miracle, and like those of ancient time, was wrought in Britain. For, to the end that the living might be stimulated to beware of the death of the soul, a certain person who had been some time dead, arose again to the life of the body, and related many things worthy of mention that he had seen; some of which I have here thought fit briefly to recount. He was, then, the father of a family, in the region of the Northumbrians, which is called Incuneningum², and led a religious life with his household; and he having been attacked with illness, and his distemper increasing daily, was brought to extremity, and died at the beginning of the night; but at daybreak he came again to life, and suddenly sat up, causing all those who had sat weeping beside the body to fly stricken with great fear; his wife only, who loved him devotedly, remained, although greatly trembling and afraid; whom he comforted, saying, 'Fear not, because I am now truly risen from death, by which I was held, and am again permitted to live among men; I must

¹ Ann. Xant. ad a. 671. 'Hoc anno quidam in Britannia a morte resurgens, multa quæ vidit de locis pœnarum et purgatorii ignis loco enarravit.' Pertz, ii. 220.

² Perhaps Cunningham, in Scotland, where the monks of Melrose, at a later time, had possessions. See Liber de Melrose, i. 72, 74.

not, however, henceforth lead the kind of life which I was wont to live before, but a very different life.' And straightway rising, he went to the oratory of the small country town, and continued in prayer until the day; afterwards, he divided all his possessions into three portions, of which he gave one to his wife, another to his children, and retaining the third himself, he straightway distributed it to the poor. And not long after, being released from worldly cares, he came to the monastery of Mailros, which is almost entirely enclosed by a bend of the river Tweed, and, having received the tonsure, entered into a secret place of abode which the abbot had provided, and there continued until the day of his death, in so great contrition of mind and body, that, even had his tongue been silent, his life would have declared that he had seen many things either to be dreaded or desired, which were unknown to others.

Moreover, he related in this manner what he had seen, saying, 'He who conducted me was bright in aspect, and had on shining raiment. We went on in silence, as it seemed to me, towards the rising of the sun at the summer solstice¹. And as we walked, we came to a valley of great breadth and depth, and also of infinite length, which lying on our left showed one of its sides exceedingly terrible with burning flames, the other not less intolerable with raging hail and the cold of snows blowing through and sweeping over every part of it. Moreover, each side was full of the souls of men, which appeared to be cast by turns from one side to the other as though by the force of a tempest. For when the wretches could not endure the violence of the

¹ The north-east.

excessive heat, they sprang forth into the midst of the cruel cold; and when neither there could they find any rest, they sprang back again to be burnt, into the midst of the inextinguishable flames. And whereas an innumerable multitude of deformed spirits were being tormented by this unhappy alternation, far and wide, as far as I could see, without any interval of rest, I began to think that this might perhaps be hell, of the intolerable torment of which I had often heard spoken. The guide who went before me answered my thought, saying, "Do not imagine this, for this is not that hell which you think."

'But when he had by degrees conducted me, greatly frightened by that horrid spectacle, into the further part, I saw the places before us suddenly begin to be obscured, and to be all filled with darkness. When we entered this darkness it became for a little while so dense, that I could see nothing beside it, except the form and raiment only of him who was conducting me. And as we advanced under the lonely night through the shades, behold, suddenly there appear before us frequent globes of foul flames ascending, as it were, from a great well, and falling back again into the same. When I had been conducted thither, all at once my guide disappeared, and left me alone in the midst of the darkness and the horrid vision. And when the same globes of fire, without intermission, now soared aloft and now sank to the bottom of the pit, I beheld all the points of the flames, as they ascended, full of the spirits of men, which, like sparks ascending with smoke, were now projected on high, and now, the vapours of the fires ceasing, sank back into the depth below.

‘ Moreover, an inconceivably noisome stench, bursting forth with the same vapours, filled all those places of darkness. And when I stood there in fear for a long time, as not knowing what to do, whither to turn my steps, or what end awaited me, I suddenly heard behind me a sound of most frightful and miserable lamentation; and at the same time a jeering laughter, as though of a rude populace insulting their captured enemies. Moreover, when the same sound becoming clearer came even unto me, I perceived a crowd of malignant spirits who, themselves exulting and laughing greatly, were dragging into the midst of that darkness five human souls bewailing and shrieking, of which human beings, to wit, as I could discern, one was shorn as a cleric, one was a layman, and one a woman. Moreover, the malignant spirits dragging them went down into the midst of that burning pit; and it came to pass that, as they went further down, I could not clearly distinguish the bewailing of the human beings from the laughter of the demons, but yet had still a confused sound in my ears. In the meantime, certain of the dark spirits ascended out of that flame-vomiting abyss, and running towards surrounded me, and tortured me with their flaming eyes, and by breathing a stinking fire out of their mouths and nostrils. They also threatened to seize me with fiery pincers which they held in their hands, but did not presume to touch me at all, although they tried to terrify me. And when, being shut in on every side by enemies and the thick darkness, I was turning my eyes hither and thither to see whether from any quarter any assistance might come whereby I might be saved, there appeared behind me, in the way by which I had come, as it

were the brightness of a star passing between the shades of darkness; and when this, increasing by degrees and coming swiftly towards me, neared me,¹ all the hostile spirits that sought to drag me away with their pincers were dispersed and fled.

‘He, however, whose approach put them to flight, was the same who conducted me before; and he presently turning to the right-hand road, as it were towards the rising of the sun at the winter solstice¹, began to lead me; and he soon brought me forth out of darkness into an atmosphere of serene light. And while he was leading me in the open light, I saw before me a very great wall, to the length of which on either side, and also to the height, there appeared to be no limit. Now I began to wonder why we went towards the wall, since I could see no door nor window in it, nor way of ascent anywhere. When then we had come to the wall, immediately we were, I know not in what way, on the top of it. And behold there was there a very broad and delightful plain, full of so great fragrance of vernal flowers, that the sweetness of this admirable odour presently dispelled all the stench of the dark furnace which had taken possession of me. Moreover, the light which was poured over all these places was so great that it appeared to be brighter than all the splendour of the day, or even than the rays of the meridian sun. And in this plain were innumerable parties of men clothed in white, and very many abodes of the rejoicing companies. And as he was leading me in the midst of the choirs of the happy inhabitants, I began to think that this might perhaps be the kingdom of heaven of which I had often heard spoken. He answered my

¹ The south-east.

thought, saying, "This is not the kingdom of heaven, as you think."

'And when, going further on, we had passed also these mansions of happy spirits, I beheld before us a much more beautiful light than the former, and in it I heard a most sweet voice of singers; also so great a fragrance of wonderful odour was poured forth from the place, that what I had experienced before, and thought the greatest possible, now seemed to me to be a very indifferent odour; just as also that extraordinary light of the flowery field, in comparison of that light which now appeared, seemed to be altogether weak and inconsiderable. And when I was hoping that we were about to enter into the pleasantness of this place, my guide suddenly stopped, and without delay, retracing his steps, brought me back by the same way by which we came.

'And when, on our return, we came to those joyful mansions of white-robed spirits, he said to me, "Do you know what all these things are which you have seen?" I answered, "No." And he said, "That valley which you beheld so dreadful with glowing flames and freezing cold, is the very place in which the souls are to be examined and chastised of those who, putting off confession and amendment from the wickedness which they had committed, at length, at the very point of death, have recourse to penitence, and so depart from the body: and these indeed, because they had confession and penitence, although but at their death, will at the day of judgment all reach the kingdom of heaven. Moreover, the prayers of the living, and alms, and fasts, and especially the celebration of masses, assist many, so that they are set free even before the day of judgment.

Further, that flame-vomiting and stinking pit which you saw, is the very mouth of hell, into which whosoever once falls will never be delivered thence to all eternity. But this flowery place, in which you behold this most fair youthful company rejoicing and shining, is the very place in which the souls of those are received, who, indeed, depart from the body in good works, but are not of so great perfection as to deserve to be immediately admitted into the kingdom of heaven, but who nevertheless will all, in the day of judgment, enter into the vision of Christ and the joys of the celestial kingdom. For whoever are perfect in every word, and deed, and thought, presently, when they have departed from the body, reach the heavenly kingdom, in the neighbourhood of which that place is, where you heard the sound of a sweet song, together with pleasant odour and splendour of light. But as for you, because you must now return to the body and again live among men, if you endeavour carefully to examine your actions, and direct your behaviour and language in rectitude and sincerity, you also yourself will receive after death a place of abode among these joyous bands of blessed spirits which you behold. For when I departed from you for a time, I did so in order that I might learn what should be done concerning you." When he had said these things to me, I greatly disliked to return to the body, being forsooth delighted with the pleasantness and beauty of that place which I beheld, and also with the company of those whom I saw in it. I did not, however, dare to ask my guide anything; but at this juncture, I know not how, I suddenly found myself alive among men.'

These and other things which he had seen the same man of

God willingly related ¹, not to all everywhere who were slothful and careless about their life, but to those only who, being either affrighted with the fear of torments, or delighted with the hope of unfading joys, wished to derive advancement in piety from his words. Lastly, in the neighbourhood of his cell lived a certain monk, by name Hæmgils, pre-eminent in the grade of the priesthood, which he adorned by good works, who is still living, and in the island of Ireland in solitude sustains the latest period of life with plain bread and cold water. He often came to the same man and drew from him by repeated questioning what and what kind of things these were which he had seen when unclothed of the body; by whose relation the few things which I have touched upon concerning these circumstances came also to my knowledge. Moreover, he related his visions even to King Aldfrid, a man in all respects most learned; and so gladly and so zealously was he listened to by him, that by his request he was admitted into the above-mentioned monastery, and crowned with the monastic tonsure; and this king came very often to hear him, when he visited those parts. Over this monastery, to wit, at that time, *Ædilwald* ², abbot and presbyter, whose life was religious and well-governed, presided, who now fills the episcopal see

¹ This vision of purgatory and hell appears to have furnished the groundwork of the descriptions of those places in the legends of the middle ages, even as late as the 'Shepherd's Calendar,' of which there were many editions in France and England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. (Stevenson.)

² *Æthelwold*, Saxon Chronicle. At first a servant of St. Cuthbert, afterwards abbot of Melrose; then made bishop of Lindisfarne, A.D. 721. Florence. He died A.D. 738, Matthew of Westminster; or A.D. 739, Florence; or A.D. 740, Simeon of Durham. He is commemorated February 12.

of the church of Lindisfarne, adorning it with deeds worthy of his exalted position.

Moreover, he received in the same monastery a more retired place of abode, where he might more freely give his time to the service of his Creator in continual prayers. And because that place was situated on the bank of a river, he was wont frequently, on account of his great desire of chastening his body, to go into this river, and to be immersed in it with the waters flowing over him; and thus there, as long as he thought that he could bear it, to persevere in psalms or prayers, and to remain stationary, while the water of the river reached to his loins, and sometimes even to his neck; and, on his coming out thence to land, he never cared to put off those wet and chilly garments, until they were warmed and dried by the heat of his body. And when, in winter-time, while the pieces of half-broken ice were floating about him, which he sometimes broke, in order that he might have a place for standing or immersing himself in the river, those who saw him said, 'It is wonderful, brother Drycthelm (for this was the man's name), that you can in any way bear such severe cold.' He used simply to answer, for he was a man of plain wit and a reserved nature, 'I have seen greater cold.' And when they said, 'It is wonderful that you will practise such severe discipline,' he used to answer, 'I have seen greater severity.' And thus, until the day of his being summoned hence, he continued, with unwearied desire of heavenly good things, to subdue his aged body with daily fastings, and by his words and manner of life, was conducive to the salvation of many.

CHAPTER XIII.

How, on the contrary, another, at the approach of death, saw a book containing his misdeeds, which was shown him by demons.

BUT, on the other hand, there was a certain person in the province of the Mercians, whose visions and words, but not his manner of life, were profitable to very many, but not to himself. Now, there lived in the time of Coënnred¹, who reigned after Ædilred², a man in the condition of a layman, and in the military service, no less by his outward diligence acceptable to the king, than by his inward negligence of himself displeasing to him. The king used therefore earnestly to admonish him to confess, and to amend from and to relinquish his wickedness, before that he should lose all opportunity of penitence and amendment by the sudden approach of death. But he, although frequently admonished, spurned the words of salvation, and promised that he would work out his repentance at some subsequent time. In the meanwhile, being attacked by sickness, he took to his bed, and began to be tortured with sharp pain. And when the king came in to him, for he loved him much, he exhorted

¹ Coennred succeeded Ædilred, A.D. 704. Saxon Chronicle. He went to Rome with Offa, A.D. 709.

² The son of King Penda. He succeeded his brother Wulfhere, A.D. 675. In A.D. 704, he became a monk in the monastery of Bardney, to which he was much attached. Bk. III. Chap. xi. He afterwards became its abbot. See Bk. V. Chap. xix.

him that even then, before he died, he should set about repentance of his misdeeds. But he replied that he did not wish to confess his sins then, but when he should recover from his sickness, lest his companions should reproach him for having done that through fear of death which he had been unwilling to do when in health—speaking courageously indeed, as he thought, but being miserably deluded by the wiles of the devil, as it afterwards appeared.

And when, his disease increasing, the king came in a second time to visit and advise him, he immediately cried out, with a lamentable voice, 'What do you want now? Why have you come hither? For you can no longer confer on me anything for my profit or salvation.' The king answered, 'Speak not thus. Try to entertain sensible thoughts.' 'I am not insane,' said he; 'but I have clearly before my eyes a knowledge most unhappy for me.' 'And what,' said he, 'is this?' 'A short time since,' said he, 'two most beautiful youths entered this house, and sat down by me, one at my head, and one at my feet; and one produced a very fair but extremely small book, and gave it to me to read; in which, on looking into it, I found all the good deeds written that I had ever done, and these were very few and inconsiderable. They took back the book, and said nothing to me. Then suddenly there came upon me an army of spirits, with malignant and horrible countenances, and both besieged this house without, and, sitting within, filled the greater part of it. Then he who, by the gloom of his dark face and the possession of the foremost seat, seemed to be their chief, producing a book dreadful to look at, and of enormous size, and almost insupportable weight,

commanded one of his satellites to bring it to me to read ; which when I read, I found all the wickedness of which I had been guilty, not only in deed or in word, but even in the least thought, most plainly written down in it, in dark letters. And he said to those white-robed and glorious men who had sat down by me, " Why sit ye here, when ye know most certainly that this man is ours ? " They answered, " You speak the truth ; take him, and conduct him to be added to the number of your damned." Having said this, they straightway disappeared ; and two most evil spirits arising, having in their hands ploughshares, struck me, one on the head, and the other on the foot ; which ploughshares, to wit, are even now penetrating into the inner parts of my body with great torture, and presently, when they meet each other, I shall die, and shall be dragged to the prisons of hell by demons, who are ready to carry me off.' Thus the wretch spoke in his despair, and, dying not long after, is now undergoing profitless punishment for all eternity, and doing the penance which he omitted to do for a brief season, when it would have been attended with forgiveness. Concerning whom it is evident, that, as blessed Pope Gregory writes of certain persons, he saw these things not for his own good, because they profited him not, but for the good of others¹, who knowing the circumstances of his death, feared to put off the time of repentance when opportunity was given them, lest, being prevented by the unforeseen approach of death, they should die without repentance. Moreover, in regard to his seeing different books shown him by good or evil spirits, it was so done by the Divine disposal, to the end

¹ Cf. *Ecclus.* xxxvii. 19.

that we should remember that our deeds and thoughts are not dissolved in air, but that all are reserved for the scrutiny of the supreme Judge, and are to be shown to us at the last by friendly or by hostile angels. But as to the angels showing him first a white book, then the demons a black one, the former a very small one, the latter an enormous one, we are to observe, that in the early part of his life he had done some good actions, all which, nevertheless, he had when a youth obscured by his evil-doing. But if, on the contrary, he had taken care in his youth to correct the errors of his childhood, and by well-doing to hide them from the eyes of God, he might have been associated with the number of those of whom the Psalm says, 'Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered¹.' This history, just as I learned it of the venerable prelate Pecthelm, I have thought fit plainly to relate, for the salvation of the readers or hearers.

CHAPTER XIV.

How another also, when about to die, saw the place of punishment in hell appointed for him.

MOREOVER, I knew a brother, whom I wish I had not known, whose name also I could tell, if that would be of any use, who resided in a famous monastery, but himself lived infamously. He used, indeed, to be frequently called to

¹ Ps. xxxii. 1.

account by the brothers and superiors of the place, and admonished to turn to a more chastened life. And although he was unwilling to hear them, he was, nevertheless, borne with by them with longsuffering, on account of the indispensableness of his more outward works, for he was remarkable for his skill in carpentry. He was, however, much addicted to intoxication, and the other allurements of a loose life; and had been more used to sit in his workshop day and night, than to join with the brethren in singing psalms, and praying in the church, and hearing the Word of life. Whence it happened to him, according to the saying of some, that he who will not enter the church door in humility of his own will, must involuntarily be damned and led through the gate of hell. For having been smitten with a languishing disorder, and brought to extremity, he called the brethren, and with much lamentation, and like to one already damned, began to relate that he had seen hell opened, and Satan immersed in the depth of Tartarus, and Caiaphas, with the rest who slew the Lord, near him, delivered up to avenging flames. 'In whose vicinity,' said he, 'alas! I see a place of eternal perdition prepared for my wretched self.' The brethren, hearing this, began diligently to exhort him that even then, while he was yet living in the body, he should work out his repentance. He answered in despair, 'I have no longer an opportunity of changing my life, since I have myself seen that judgment is already passed on me.' Saying this, he died, without the viaticum of salvation, and his body was buried on the confines of the monastery, nor did any one venture either to perform masses, or sing psalms, or even to pray for him. Oh how great an

interval has God put between light and darkness ! The blessed protomartyr Stephen, when about to suffer death for the truth, saw heaven opened, saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God¹; and where he himself was about to be after death, there he directed the eyes of his mind before death, so that he might die more joyfully. But, on the contrary, that carpenter, of dark mind and actions, when death was impending, saw hell opened, saw the damnation of the devil and his followers, saw also, unhappy wretch ! his own prison among them, so that he might more miserably perish despairing of salvation, but might leave, by his own perdition, a cause of salvation to the living, who should come to know of these things. This took place lately, in the province of the Bernicii, and being published abroad far and wide, inclined many to set about and not to defer penitence for their misdeeds : which I would might be effected hereafter by the reading of what I have written.

¹ Acts vii. 56.

CHAPTER XV.

How many churches of the Scots, at the instance of Adamnan, adopted the catholic mode of keeping Easter; and how the same Adamnan wrote a book concerning the Holy Places.

AT which time¹, the greater part of the Scots in Ireland², and some part also of the Britons in Britain, adopted, the Lord granting it, the reasonable and ecclesiastical time of keeping Easter. For Adamnan³, a presbyter, and the abbot of the monks who were in the island of Hii, when, being sent on an embassy by his own nation, he came to Aldfrid, the king of the Angles, stayed some time in that province, and witnessed the canonical rites of the Church; and being diligently admonished by many who were the most learned, not to presume with his people, being very few and situate in a remote corner of the world, to live contrary to the universal custom of the Church, either with regard to the observance of Easter, or any other ordinances, he became changed in his opinions, so that he most freely

¹ According to Matthew of Westminster, in A.D. 701. In A.D. 702, a synod was held at Onestrefeld, or Estrefeld (Nesterfield, near Ripon), by King Aldfrid and Archbishop Berctwald, to require of Wilfrid obedience to all the decrees of Archbishop Theodore. After the synod, Wilfrid withdrew to Ethelred, king of Mercia, and afterwards went to Rome to appeal to the pope. Hædde, Life of Wilfrid, 24, 44.

² The Scots in the northern part of Ireland, for the Scots in the southern part had adopted the Roman rule of keeping Easter. See Bk. III. Chap. iii.

³ Commemorated September 23. There was another Adamnan, a priest of Coldingham. Bk. IV. Chap. xxv.

preferred those things which he had seen and heard in the churches of the Angles, to his own and his people's custom. For he was a good and wise man, and notably instructed in the knowledge of the Scriptures.

And when he had returned home, he endeavoured to bring his people, who were in Hii, or who were under the control of the same monastery, to that path of truth with which he had become acquainted, and which he himself had entered on with his whole heart, but he could not. He sailed to Ireland, and preaching to the people there, and, with modest exhortation, declaring the correct time of the Passover, recovered and brought back from their forefathers' error to catholic unity very many of them, and nearly all those who were free from the authority of the people of Hii, and taught them to observe the legitimate time of Easter. And when, having celebrated a canonical paschal feast in Ireland, he had returned to his own island, and was most instant in proclaiming to his monastery the catholic observance of the paschal season, and nevertheless could not accomplish what he attempted, it happened that before the circle of the year was completed he departed from this world: the Divine grace so disposing, that the man who was most zealous for unity and peace should be taken away to eternal life, before that, on the return of the paschal season, he would be compelled to have a more serious dispute with those who were unwilling to follow him in the way of truth.

The same man wrote a book about the Holy Places¹, very profitable to many who read it; the originator of which book in furnishing information, and dictating it, was Arculf, a

¹ He also wrote a Life of St. Columba, in three books. (Smith.)

bishop of Gaul¹, who, on account of the Sacred Places, had gone to Jerusalem, and, having surveyed all the Land of Promise, had gone also to Damascus, Constantinople, Alexandria, and many islands of the sea; and on his return by ship to his own country, was driven by the violence of a storm on the western shores of Britain, and, after many adventures, came to the aforesaid servant of Christ, Adamnan, and being found to be learned in the Scriptures, and acquainted with the Holy Places, was most gladly entertained by him, and even more gladly listened to; so that whatever the one vouched that he had seen in the Holy Places worthy of mention, all this the other presently took care to commit to writing. Thus he composed a work, as I have said, of great use to many, and especially to those who, being far removed from those places in which the patriarchs and apostles were, know no more of them than what they learn by reading. Moreover, Adamnan presented this book to King Aldfrid, and, by his munificence, those also who were of an inferior station were enabled to procure copies of it. The writer also himself having been presented with many gifts by him, was sent back to his own country. I think it of advantage to my readers for me to extract some passages from his writings, and to insert them in this History of mine.

¹ 'Quis fuerit Arculfus ille, quisque Petrus ejus socius ac dux itineris incompertum. Tantum scimus Arculfum episcopum Gallum fuisse. Petrum eremitam e Burgundia ortum.' Mabill. Act. SS. Benedd. iv. 502.

CHAPTER XVI.

What he made mention of in the same book concerning the place of the Lord's nativity, passion, and resurrection.

HE wrote then, after this manner, concerning the place of the Lord's nativity :—' Bethlehem¹, the city of David, is situate on a narrow ridge, and surrounded on every side by valleys. It is one mile in length from west to east, with a low wall without towers built along the edge of the level summit : in the eastern angle of which there is, as it were, a certain natural double cavern, the outer part of which is said to have been the place of the Lord's nativity ; the inner part is named the Lord's Stable. The whole of the inner part of this cavern is paved with costly marble, upon the particular spot where tradition reports that the Lord was born, and above it is the large church of St. Mary.' Also, he wrote in this manner concerning the place of His passion and resurrection :—' By those who enter the city of Jerusalem from the north side, the first of the holy places which, according to the direction of the streets, must be visited, is the church of Constantine, which is called the Martyrium². This church the Emperor Constantine, because the cross of the Lord was there found by his mother Helena, built in a magnificent and royal style. From thence, on the west, is seen the church of Golgotha³, in which also appears that rock which formerly bore the very cross with the Lord's body fixed on

¹ Adamnan, ii. 1, 2.

² Ib. i. 7.

³ Ib. i. 6.

it, and now bears a very large silver cross, above which hangs a great brazen corona decorated with lamps. But, beneath the very place of the Lord's cross, there is a crypt excavated in the rock, in which the sacrifice is wont to be offered on an altar, for distinguished persons deceased, while the bodies are set down in the street. To the west of this church is the Anastasis, that is, the round church of the Lord's resurrection, surrounded by three walls, and supported by twelve columns; having a wide passage between the several walls, which contains three altars in three different places of the middle wall, that is, to the south, the north, and the west. This church has twice four doors, that is, entrances directly through the three walls, four of which are towards the north-east, and four towards the south-east. In the middle of this church is the circular sepulchre of the Lord, cut out in the rock, the top of which a man standing within can touch with his hand; it has an entrance from the east, at which that great stone was set. This sepulchre shows within, even at this present time, the marks of iron tools. On the outside, to the summit of the height, the whole is overlaid with marble. Moreover, the topmost height is adorned with gold, and bears a large golden cross. In the northern part of this monument, then, is the sepulchre of the Lord cut out in the same rock, seven feet in length, and elevated above the pavement beyond the measure of three palms; having an entrance on the south side, where twelve lamps burn day and night, four within the sepulchre, and eight above, at the right edge of it. The stone which was set at the door of the monument, is now cleft in two pieces, of which the smaller piece, an oblong altar-stone, stands,

nevertheless, before the door of the same monument; but the greater piece stands as another quadrangular altar, in the eastern part of the same church, and is covered with linen cloths. Moreover, the colour of the same monument and sepulchre appears to be a mixture of white and red.'

CHAPTER XVII.

What also concerning the place of the Lord's ascension, and the sepulchres of the patriarchs.

ALSO concerning the place of the Lord's ascension, the aforesaid author speaks in this manner:—'The Mount of Olives is equal in height to Mount Sion, but exceeds it in breadth and length; it bears few trees, except vines and olives, and is fruitful in wheat and barley. For the quality of its soil is not suitable for thickets¹, but for grass and flowers. On the highest point of it, where the Lord ascended into heaven, is a large circular church, having three vaulted porticoes round about it, roofed overhead. For the interior part of the building could not be vaulted and roofed, on account of the passage² of the Lord's body; but it has an altar towards the east, protected by a narrow coping, in the middle of which the last footsteps of the Lord are seen, the sky being

¹ brucosa, or broccosa, 'dumetis consita,' from broca, a spike or stake.

² Adamnan says this of the *pavement*. 'Locus vestigiorum Domini . . . continuari pavimento cum reliqua stratorum parte non potuit. Siquidem quæcumque adplicabantur insolens humana suscipere terra respueret, in ora adponentium excussis marmoribus.' p. 509.

open above, where He ascended. The earth, although it is daily taken away by believers, nevertheless remains, and still keeps the same appearance of being marked by the impression of footsteps. Around these a brazen wheel¹ lies, as high as a man's neck, having an entrance from the west, with a great lamp hanging by a pulley above it, burning all day and night. In the western part of the same church are eight windows; and as many lamps, hanging by cords opposite to them, cast light through the glass as far as Jerusalem. This light is said to make the hearts of the beholders tremble with a certain eagerness and compunction. Every year, on the day of the Lord's ascension, when mass has been performed, a violent gust of wind is wont to come down and to lay prostrate on the earth all who are in the church.'

Also concerning the site of Chebron, and the monuments of the fathers, he thus writes:—'Chebron, formerly the city and metropolis of the kingdom of David, now only showing by its ruins what it then was. One furlong to the east it has a double cavern, in a valley where are the sepulchres of the patriarchs, surrounded by an oblong wall, their heads lying towards the north, and each of them covered with a single stone wrought in the likeness of a basilica; the sepulchres of three of the patriarchs² with a white shining

¹ This Du Cange explains as, '*Lychnuchus, in formam rotæ a fornice pendens in ædibus sacris, quæ alii coronam vocant.*' Cf. '*Ponuntur dehinc in ecclesia gemmatæ non coronæ sed rotæ circumseptæ lampadibus.*' Bernard. Apol. ad Gul. Abbat. II. v. 4. p. 39. And, '*grandis quædam ærea cum lampadibus rota in funibus pendet.*' Adamnan, p. 506. Hussey supposes it to have been a metal screen.

² Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

stone ; that of Adam, who lies not far from them, towards the north, at the farthest end of that wall, is of plainer and less costly workmanship. The sepulchres also of three women¹ are seen, less costly and smaller.

‘The hill of Mamre is a mile to the north of these monuments, very abundant in grass and flowers, having a level space on its summit ; on the north part of which Abraham’s oak, a trunk of twice the height of a man, is enclosed in a church.’

These extracts from the works of the aforesaid writer, according, indeed, to the sense of his words, but comprehended in shorter and concise sentences, I have thought fit to insert in my History, for the benefit of the readers. Whosoever wishes to know more of what is contained in that volume, may look for it either in the volume itself, or in the concise abridgment which I lately made of it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

How the South Saxons received Eadberct and Eolla for their bishops, the West Saxons Danihel and Aldhelm ; and concerning the writings of the same Aldhelm.

IN the year of the Lord’s incarnation 705, Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, deceased, before he had quite completed the twentieth² year of his reign ; and his son Osred, a boy

¹ Sarah, Rebekah, and Leah.

² Since Aldfrid came to the throne in May, A.D. 685 (Bk. IV. Chap. xxvi.) and reigned not quite twenty years, he could not have lived until 19 Kal. Jan. (Dec. 14), as Florence and the Saxon Chronicle affirm. But if we

of about eight years of age, succeeding¹ him in the government, reigned² eleven years. In the beginning of his reign, Hæddi³, the bishop of the West Saxons, departed to the heavenly life. He was, forsooth, a good and just man, and exercised his episcopal life and teaching, being instructed more by his innate love of virtues than by the reading of books. In short, the most reverend prelate Pecthelm⁴, of whom I must speak hereafter in the proper place, who was for a long time, being as yet a deacon or a monk, with his successor Aldhelm, was wont to relate that many miracles of healings were wrought in the place where he died, on account of the merit of his sanctity; and that the men of that province were accustomed to take the dust thence, and put it into water, for the good of sick persons; and that the drinking or sprinkling of it conferred health on many sick men and cattle; by reason of which, through the frequent carrying away of the sacred dust, a considerable pit was made in the place.

substitute June for January (months frequently confused by the scribes of early MSS.), it will appear that he died May 16, A.D. 705, when a few days were wanting to complete the twentieth year of his reign, as Bede has stated. (Stevenson.)

¹ Hædde states that Eadwulf reigned for two months after Aldfrid, and was then expelled, and succeeded by Osred. Vit. Vilfr. 57.

² Osred, a child eight years old, was raised to the throne by the influence of Berctfrid, the most powerful ealdorman of the country, who also gained a victory for him against the Picts and Scots. This victory was gained between Hæfe and Cære (Caraw, Northumberland). Tigernach, a. 711, mentions it: 'Strages Pictorum in campo Manaud a Saxonia, ubi Fingaine mac Deleroith immatura [morte jacuit.]' Osred's mother was Cuthburh, sister of Ina, king of Wessex. (Moberly.)

³ See Bk. III. Chap. vii.

⁴ Afterwards bishop of Whithern. Bk. V. Chap. xxiv.

On his decease, the bishopric of that province was divided into two dioceses¹. One was given to Danihel², which he governs to this day; the other to Aldhelm³, over which he most energetically presided four years; both of them being fully instructed as well in ecclesiastical matters as in the knowledge of the Scriptures. In short, Aldhelm, when he was as yet a presbyter and abbot of the monastery which they call the City of Mailduf⁴, wrote, by the command of the synod of his nation, an excellent book⁵ against the error of the Britons, in that they do not keep Easter at the proper time, and that they have very many other practices contrary to ecclesiastical purity and peace; and brought by

¹ 'Remanserunt autem episcopo Wintonensi duæ provinciæ tantum, Hamptonensis scilicet et Sutheriensis: alteri vero provinciæ, Wiltunensis, Dorsetensis, Berrucensis, Somersetensis, Devoniensis, Cornubiensis.' Matt. West. ad a. 704. The division was made 'synodali concilio.' Angl. Sacr. ii. 20.

² Danihel was a disciple of Mailduf, at Malmesbury. He made a journey to Rome, A.D. 721. Florence. In A.D. 744, he resigned his see, and in A.D. 745, he died.

³ Aldhelm was first a monk at Malmesbury, and afterwards abbot.

⁴ 'Maildufus vitam eremiticam ducens sub castello de Bladon, quod Saxonice dicitur Ingebbone castel Regia habitatio et ejus manerium non longe fuit a castello apud Brokenberg. Prædictus eremita petiit a castellanis tugurium sibi fieri sub castello et obtinuit. Hic dum sibi necessaria deficerent, scholares sibi in disciplinam adunavit. Brevi autem tempore scholares in exiguum conventum coaluere. Horum consortio S. Aldhelmus ad plenum informatus artem dialecticam adjecit erudire. Deinde hinc fugiens ad pedes Adriani abbatis per aliquod tempus studuit, et sufficienter edoctus Meldunum repetiit. Qui postea cum sociis suis sub Maildufo monacho attonsus est, vivente Maildufo post tonsionem ejus annos 14.' Leland, Collect. iii. 158.

⁵ Inscribed to Geruntius, king of Cornwall. It is inserted among the Epistles of Boniface, Ep. xlv.

the reading of this book many of those Britons who were subject to the West Saxons to the catholic celebration of the Lord's passover. He also wrote a choice book concerning virginity, which, after the example of Sedulius, he composed in a twofold form, both in hexameter verses and in prose. He wrote also several other books, being, indeed, a man every way most learned; for he was elegant in his language, and, as I said, was to be admired for his erudition, as well in liberal ¹ as in ecclesiastical writings. On his death, Forthere ² received the episcopate in his place, who is living to this day, himself also a man well learned in the holy Scriptures.

During their administration of the episcopate, it was enacted, by a synodal decree ³, that the province of the South Saxons, which up to that time belonged ⁴ to the diocese of the city of Winchester, over which Danihel then presided, should itself have both an episcopal see and a bishop of its own; and Eadberct was consecrated their first prelate, who was abbot of the monastery of Bishop Wilfrid of blessed memory, which is called Selæseu ⁵. At whose death, Eolla received the office of the pontificate. Moreover, he having been withdrawn from this light a few years since, the bishopric has continued void unto this day.

¹ The classic authors. 'Scripturæ ecclesiasticæ,' mean theological writings, as distinct from 'Scripturæ Sacræ.'

² Forthere visited Rome in A.D. 737, in company with Frithogith, queen of Wessex. Saxon Chronicle.

³ Matthew of Westminster places this synod and the consecration of Eadberct in A.D. 711.

⁴ See Bk. IV. Chap. xv.

⁵ See Bk. IV. Chap. xiii.

CHAPTER XIX.

How Coinred¹, king of the Mercians, and Offa, king of the East Saxons, ended their lives at Rome, in the monastic habit; and concerning the life and death of Bishop Wilfrid.

IN the fourth year of the reign of Osred, Coinred, who had for some time most nobly governed the kingdom of the Mercians, relinquished much more nobly the sceptre of the kingdom. For he went to Rome, and there received the tonsure, when Constantine² held the pontificate; and becoming a monk, he continued at the courts of the apostles in prayers, fastings, and almsdeeds, unto his last day, Ceolrid³ being his successor in the kingdom, the son of Ædilred, who himself ruled the same kingdom before Coinred. Moreover, the son of Sighere, king of the East Saxons, of whom I have above made mention⁴, by name Offa⁵, a youth of a most amiable age and beauty, and very greatly longed

¹ Called Cœnred above. See Chap. xiii. He was the son of Wulfhere. Following the example of his paternal uncle Ædilred, he went to Rome, and became a monk, being smitten with compunction on account of the wretched death of the soldier, concerning whom see Chap. xv. Malmes. de Reg. i. 4.

² By nation a Syrian. He was consecrated March 25, A.D. 708, and governed the Roman Church until April 8, A.D. 715.

³ He fought an indecisive (Matt. West.) battle with Ina, king of Wessex, at Wodnesbeorhe, A.D. 715. Saxon Chronicle. He died the next year.

⁴ Bk. III. Chap. xxx., and Bk. IV. Chap. vi.

⁵ He succeeded Sighard and Seofrid. Ecgwine, bishop of Worcester, accompanied Cœnred and Offa to Rome. He brought back a letter from Rome granting privileges to his monastery at Evesham.

for by all his nation to hold and keep the sceptre of the kingdom, went also with him. He, being led by a like devotion of mind, left his wife¹, lands, kindred, and country, for Christ, and for the Gospel, in order that he might receive a hundredfold in this life, and, in the world to come, life everlasting. He also, then, when he came to the holy places at Rome, receiving the tonsure and ending his life in the monastic habit, attained to the long-desired vision of the blessed apostles in heaven.

In the same year in which they left Britain, the excellent prelate Wilfrid, forty-five years after he had received the episcopate, closed his last day, in the province which is called Inundalum²; and his body, having been put in a coffin, was carried to his own monastery, which is called Inhrypum, and buried in the church of the blessed apostle Peter, with the honour due to so great a pontiff. Concerning whose manner of life let me, retracing my steps to its commencement, briefly relate the particulars of it. Being a boy of a good disposition, and of manners beyond his years, he conducted himself so modestly and circumspectly in all things, that he was deservedly beloved, regarded, and esteemed by his elders, as though one of themselves. When he reached his fourteenth year, he chose a monastic in preference to a secular life. When he signified this choice to his father, for his mother was already dead, he willingly assented to his heavenly wishes and desires, and bade him go on with his salutary undertaking. He came,

¹ He was not married, but betrothed, to Kyneswitha, daughter of Penda king of Mercia.

² Oundle, near Stamford, in Northamptonshire.

therefore¹, to the island of Lindisfarne, and there giving himself up to the service of the monks, diligently took heed both to learn and to do those things which belonged to monastic purity and piety. And because he had a quick understanding, he very soon learned the psalms² and some books, not yet indeed having received the tonsure, but being in no mean degree remarkable for those virtues of humility and obedience which are superior to the tonsure; on which account he was justly regarded with affection both by his seniors and by those of his own age. In which monastery, to wit, when he had served God some years, this wise-minded youth perceived by degrees that the way of virtue which was delivered by the Scots, was very defective, and he purposed in his mind to visit Rome, and to see what ecclesiastical or monastic rites were observed at the apostolic see. Which when he had referred to the brethren, they praised his resolution, and advised him to accomplish what he had disposed in his mind. He then presently went to Queen Eanfleda, because he was known to her, and had become an associate of the aforesaid monastery by her advice and assistance, and informed her of his desire to visit the courts of the blessed apostles; and she, being pleased with the youth's good resolution, sent him to Kent to King Erconberct, who was the son of her maternal uncle, desiring of him that he would send him in an honourable manner to Rome. At that time, Honorius, one of the scholars of the

¹ Florence and Simeon of Durham say that Wilfrid was about thirty years of age in A.D. 664, which would place his birth about A.D. 634.

² 'Omnem psalmorum seriem memorialiter et aliquantos libros didicit.' Hædde, 2.

blessed Pope Gregory, a man highly instructed in ecclesiastical matters, held there the position of archbishop. When this youth of active mind had stayed there for some time, being diligently intent on learning those things which he was enquiring into, another youth, by name Biscop, surnamed Benedict, one of the nobility of the Angles, arrived there, himself also being desirous of visiting Rome; of whom I have made mention above.

The king then associated Wilfrid in companionship with him, and ordered him to conduct him to Rome. And when they had come to Lyons, Wilfrid was there detained by Dalfinus¹, bishop of that city, but Benedict quickly completed the journey to Rome, which he had begun. For the prelate was charmed with the prudence of the youth's words, the grace of his fair countenance, the alacrity of his behaviour, and the consistency and maturity of his reflections. Wherefore also he gave him and his companions all things in abundance which they wanted, so long as they were with him; and offered besides, if he were willing, to commit to him the government of a considerable part of Gaul, and to give him the virgin daughter of his own brother for a wife, and to consider him always as his adopted son. But he, returning him thanks for the kindness which he had deigned to show him, being a stranger, replied, that he made more account of his determination to lead a different kind of life,

¹ Annemundus was the bishop of Lyons at this time. It appears that he had a brother called Dalfinus, whose daughter was offered in marriage to Wilfrid. Pagi places the murder of this bishop in A.D. 658. Mabillon considers that Ebrinus, the maire du palais, who administered the government in the name of Queen Balhild, was the sole author of this act.

and for that reason had left his country and set out on a journey to Rome.

On hearing this, the prelate sent him to Rome, having given him a guide, and having liberally supplied him with all things which were needed for the journey; earnestly requesting him that, when he returned to his own country, he would not forget to come his way. On his arrival at Rome, devoting himself with daily instancy to prayers and the study of ecclesiastical subjects, as he had purposed, he gained the friendship of a most learned and holy man, to wit, the archdeacon Boniface, who was also the counsellor of the apostolic pope; under whose tutorship he learned the four books of the Gospels in order, the rational computation of Easter; and many other things appertaining to ecclesiastical discipline, which he had not been able to learn in his own country, he learnt by the same master's teaching. And when he had spent some months there, occupied with profitable studies, he returned into Gaul to Dalfinus, and staying three years with him, received from him the tonsure, and was so much beloved by him, that he thought of making him his heir. But this was prevented by the prelate's being snatched away by a cruel death, and Wilfrid was reserved for the episcopate of his own, that is, the nation of the Angles, instead. For Queen Baldhild¹, having sent soldiers

¹ Called also Balthildis, *Batbilde*. She was of noble Saxon origin, but being seized by brigands, was sold to a distinguished Frank, named Erchinwald. From this servile condition she was raised to be the consort of King Hlodowig II. On his death, she governed the kingdom for his son Clothaire. She founded the monasteries of Corbey and Chelles, and eventually retired to the latter, where she ended her life.

with orders to put the bishop to death, Wilfrid, his cleric, followed him to the place where he was to be beheaded, desiring to die together with him, although the bishop strongly opposed it. But when the executioners found that he was a foreigner, and sprung of the nation of the Angles, they spared him, and would not put him to death with his bishop.

Then he, coming to Britain, was admitted to the friendship of King Alchfrid¹, who had learnt to follow always and to love the catholic rules of the Church. Whence also, because he found him to be a Catholic, he presently gave him the land of ten families, in a place which is called Stanford²; and, not long after³, a monastery with land of thirty families⁴, in the place which is called Inrhypum; which place, to wit, he had before given to those⁵ who followed the customs of the Scots, to build a monastery there. But because afterwards, when the option was given them, they chose rather to leave the place than to receive the catholic Easter, and other

¹ Sometimes confounded with Aldfrid, who was Oswy's legitimate son, and died during his father's lifetime. Alchfrid was a reputed son of Oswy, and reigned after his brother Ecgrid. Cf. Bk. IV. Chap. xxvi.

² Not Stamford in Lincolnshire, in which Alchfrid had no authority, but probably Stamford on the river Derwent, in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

³ About A.D. 661 (Smith). Florence says that Benedict, with whom Wilfrid went to Rome, set out from Britain A.D. 653. Wilfrid, after staying some time with Dalfinus, came to Rome A.D. 664. He probably returned to Dalfinus the next year; and, having stayed with him three years, returned to Britain A.D. 658. After having been in attendance on Alchfrid three years, he was made abbot of Ripon, A.D. 661. Eadmer's Life of Wilfrid.

⁴ Forty, Bk. III. Chap. xxv.

⁵ Eata, abbot of Melrose, St. Cuthbert, and other monks of Melrose. See Life of Cuthbert, 7, 8.

canonical rites, according to the custom of the Roman and apostolic Church, he gave it to him whom he perceived to be acquainted with better rules and customs.

At which time, by the order of the aforesaid king, he was ordained presbyter in the same monastery by Agilberct, bishop of the Gevissi, of whom I have above made mention, the king being desirous that a man of so great erudition and piety should be specially his own priest and teacher in inseparable companionship¹. And not long after that the sect of the Scots, as I have before said², had been detected and driven out, he sent him to Gaul, by the advice and with the consent³ of his father Oswy, requesting that he might be ordained bishop for him, being now about thirty years of age, the same Agilberct having then the episcopate of the city of Paris, together with whom eleven other bishops also coming to the consecration of the prelate, fulfilled the ministration in a highly honourable manner⁴. And while he was still abiding in parts beyond the sea, Ceadda, a holy man, as has before been said⁵, was consecrated bishop of York by command of King Oswy; and after having ably ruled that church for three years, retired⁶ to take the

¹ Perhaps as domestic chaplain.

² Bk. III. Chap. xxviii. ; Bk. IV. Chap. ii.

³ Dated by Bede A.D. 664. Bk. V. Chap. xxiv. 'Tunc quoque consenserunt reges, et omnis populus huic electioni, et S. Wilfrido presbytero omnis conventus in nomine Domini accipere gradum episcopalem præcepit.' Hædde, 11.

⁴ 'In sella aurea sedentem more eorum sursum elevarunt, portantes in manibus soli episcopi intra oratoria, nullo alio attingente, hymnosque et cantica in choro canentes.' Hædde, 12.

⁵ See Bk. III. Chap. xxviii. Dated by Florence A.D. 667.

⁶ Bk. IV. Chap. iii.

charge of his monastery, which is in Læstingæu; and Wilfrid received the episcopate of the whole province of the Northumbrians.

Afterwards, in the reign of Ecgfrid, he was expelled¹ from his bishopric, and other prelates, of whom I have above made mention, were consecrated in his place. Intending to go to Rome and plead his cause before the apostolic pope, when he had gone on board ship, he was driven, by a west wind which blew, to Friesland, and having been honourably received by the barbarians and their king Aldgils², he preached Christ to them, and instructing many thousands of them in the word of truth, washed them from the defilement of their sins in the Saviour's font; and he first began there that evangelical work which Vilbrord³, a most reverend pontiff of Christ, afterwards completed with great devotion. Here, then, passing the winter happily with the new people of God, he thus resumed his journey⁴ towards Rome; and when his cause came before Pope Agatho and many bishops, he was pronounced by the judgment of them all to have been falsely accused, and to be worthy of his episcopate. At which time, the same Pope Agatho, when he had assembled a synod at Rome of 125 bishops against those who asserted that there was but one will and operation in the Lord the

¹ Bk. IV. Chap. xii.

² Ebrinus tried to bribe Adgils to give him up; but he was faithful to Wilfrid. Hædde, 17.

³ See Chaps. x. and xi.

⁴ He passed through the territories of Dagobert, king of Austrasia, who offered him the bishopric of Strasburg, and of Bertari, king of the Lombards. This was 'verno tempore adveniente.' He arrived at Rome the same year, A.D. 691. Florence. Hædde, 28.

Saviour, ordered Wilfrid also to be summoned, and, sitting among the bishops, to declare his own faith as well as that of the province or island whence he had come; and when he and his people were found to be catholic in their belief, it was thought fit that this fact should be inserted, among other things, in the proceedings of the same synod; and it was written in this manner¹:—‘Wilfrid, beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, appealing to the apostolic see respecting his cause, and being by this power acquitted of charges definite and indefinite, and being placed together with 125 other bishops in synod on the seat of judgment, both made confession of the true and catholic faith for all the region of the north, the islands of Britain and Ireland, which are inhabited by the nations of the Angles and Britons, and also of the Scots and Picts, and confirmed it with his own subscription.’

Afterwards, returning² to Britain, he converted the province of the South Saxons³ from the rites of idolatry to the faith of Christ. He also sent ministers of the Word to the Isle of Wight⁴; and in the second year of Aldfrid, who reigned after Ecgfrid, he took again his own see⁵ and

¹ In his petition, Wilfrid calls himself ‘humilis et indignus episcopus Saxoniarum.’ Hædde, 30.

² On his return, Ecgfrid imprisoned him for nine months. At last he was released and banished from Northumbria by the advice of Æbba, abbess of Coldingham. He retired to Mercia, and afterwards to Wessex, but Ecgfrid caused his expulsion from both these kingdoms, being connected in marriage with both their kings. Hædde, 32–39.

³ See Bk. IV. Chap. xiii.

⁴ See Bk. IV. Chap. xvi.

⁵ i. e. of Hexham. Chap. iii.

bishopric¹ by the invitation of that king. But five years afterwards, being again accused, he was deprived by the very same king and several bishops of his prelacy²; and on his going to Rome, and having an opportunity given him of making his defence in the presence of his accusers, a great number of bishops, together with John the apostolic pope, sitting in judgment together, it was proved by the judgment of them all that his accusers had in no small measure invented false charges against him; and the aforesaid pope wrote³ to the kings of the Angles, Ædilred and Aldfrid, that they should cause him to be restored to his bishopric, because he had been unjustly condemned. Moreover, the reading of the acts of the synod of Pope Agatho of blessed memory, which was formerly held when Wilfrid was present in the city, and sat among the bishops in the same council, as I before said, assisted his plea for acquittal. For when, the cause requiring it, the acts of the same synod were being read for some days⁴ before the nobles and a concourse of

¹ Wilfrid administered the bishopric of Lindisfarne, besides his own of Hexham, for two years, A.D. 686–688. (Moberly.)

² Wilfrid withdrew to Mercia, where he administered the bishopric vacant by the death of Sexwulf, from about A.D. 691 to A.D. 703. Thence he was summoned to attend the synod held at Onestrefeld (Nesterfield, near Ripon), which deprived him of all his dignities except the abbacy of Ripon; after which he withdrew to Mercia to Ædilred. Hædde, 44–46. John was reinstated in the see of Hexham. ‘Post quinque annos Wilfrido iterum et Alfrido expulso, illi sedibus suis restituti sunt;’ i. e. Bosa to York, and John to Hexham. Malmes. Gest. Pontt. iii. 269. On hearing that sentence of excommunication had been passed on him and his adherents, Wilfrid went to Rome to appeal to the pope. Hædde, 48.

³ Malmesbury and Wilkins give this letter.

⁴ The trial of his cause lasted four months, and there were seventy sessions of the council during it.

people, by the order of the apostolic pope, they came to the place where it was written, 'Wilfrid, beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, appealing to the apostolic see respecting his cause, and being by this power acquitted of charges definite and indefinite,' and the rest as I have above stated. This being read, astonishment seized on the hearers; and the reader stopping, they began to ask of one another who that bishop Wilfrid was. Then Boniface, the counsellor of the apostolic pope, and many others who had seen him there in the time of Pope Agatho, said that he was the very same bishop who, having been accused by his people, had recently come to Rome to be judged by the apostolic see; 'Inasmuch as long ago,' they said, 'having been similarly accused, he had come thither, and presently, when the cause and controversy of either side had been heard and examined, was declared by Pope Agatho of blessed memory to have been wrongfully deprived of his bishopric, and was held in such esteem by him, that he ordered him to sit in the council of bishops which he had assembled, as being a man of uncorrupt faith and an upright mind. On hearing which, they all agreed with the pontiff himself in saying that a man of so great authority, who had for nearly forty¹ years discharged the office of bishop, ought by no means to be condemned, but having been entirely acquitted of the blame imputed to him, to be sent back with honour to his country.

And when, returning to Britain, he had come into the parts of Gaul, he was attacked by a sudden illness, and was brought so low, as it increased, that he could not ride, but was carried in a litter by the hands of his servants. Having

¹ He was acquitted in April A.D. 704.

been brought thus to Mældum¹, a city of Gaul, he lay four days and nights as one dead, showing only by a slight breathing that he lived. And when he had so continued, without food or drink, without speech or hearing, for the space of four days, he at length, on the fifth day at daybreak, as though awaking from a heavy sleep, rose to a sitting posture; and, on opening his eyes, saw about him the choirs of the brethren singing psalms and likewise weeping: and sighing a little, he asked where the presbyter Acca was; who, on being summoned, immediately came in, and seeing him better and now able to speak, gave thanks to God on bended knees together with all the brethren who were present. And when they had sat with him a little while, and, in fear and awe at the judgments of heaven, had begun to discourse together, the bishop ordered the rest to go out for an hour, and began to speak thus to the presbyter Acca. ‘An awful vision just now appeared to me, which I wish you to hear and to keep secret, until I know what the Lord wills should be done concerning me. For a certain one stood by me bright in white garments, telling me that he was the archangel Michael, and said, “I am sent in order to recover you from death; for the Lord, by reason of the prayers and tears of your disciples and brethren, and through the intercession of His blessed mother and ever-virgin Mary, has granted you life. Wherefore I tell you that now indeed you shall recover from this distemper; but be ready, because after four years I shall return and visit you; but, when you reach your country, you shall recover the greatest part of your possessions which have been taken from you, and shall

¹ Meaux, in Champagne.

end your life in tranquil peace." ' The bishop accordingly regained his health, at which all persons rejoiced and gave thanks to God, and having resumed his journey arrived in Britain.

Moreover, the letters being read which he had brought from the apostolic pope, Archbishop Berctwāld, and Ædilred, formerly king but then abbot, most willingly gave him their support, and this Ædilred, to wit, sending for Coinred, whom he had made king in his stead, desired of him to be a friend to the bishop, and obtained his request. But Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, contumaciously refused to receive him, and lived but a short time afterwards: whence it came to pass that in the reign of his son Osred, when a synod¹ had been presently convened near the river Nidd², after some conflict of opinion on both sides, at length he was, with the approval of all, restored to the governance of his own church³. And so he passed his life in peace for four years, that is, until the day of his decease. Moreover, he deceased⁴ in his own monastery which he had in the province of Undalum, under the governance of Abbot Cudwald; and having been carried by the hands of the brethren to his first monastery, which is called Inrhypum, he was laid in the church of the blessed apostle Peter, near the altar, to the south, as I have above said; and this epitaph concerning him was inscribed on his tomb:—

¹ See Hædde, 58, and Spel. Con. i. 203.

² The Nith.

³ That of Hexham, which he himself built, A.D. 764, in honour of St. Andrew the Apostle.

⁴ April 24

'Here the great prelate Wilfrid's body lies,
 Who, led by piety, this temple rear'd¹
 To God, and hallow'd it in Peter's name,
 To whom the world's Judge gave the keys of heaven.
 He deck'd its walls with purple and with gold:
 And here a cross, that glorious trophy, placed
 Of shining metal; and, by his command,
 The Gospels four, in golden letters writ,
 Were in a golden casket fitly shrined.
 He also the recurring Easter time
 Corrected by the true and catholic rule
 Fix'd by the fathers: error he expell'd,
 And gave his race sure guidance for the rite.
 And in these parts he brought together bands
 Of monks, and them establish'd in the ways
 Taught by the fathers' rule. At home, abroad,
 Long time by many grievous dangers toss'd,
 Having as bishop spent thrice fifteen years,
 He pass'd away, and heaven rejoicing sought.
 Grant, Lord, the flock to tread their shepherd's path.'

CHAPTER XX.

How Albinus succeeded the religious abbot Hadrian², and Acca succeeded Wilfrid in the episcopate.

IN the next year after the decease of the aforesaid father, that is, in the fifth year of King Osred, the most reverend father, Abbot Hadrian, the fellow-labourer in the Word of God of Bishop Theodore of blessed memory, deceased, and was buried in his monastery, in the church³ of the blessed

¹ See Richard of Hexham, Twysden, p. 290. Wilfrid also built a costly church at Ripon, and restored the decayed church of York. Hædde, 16, 17.

² See Bk. IV. Chap. i.

³ See Bk. II. Chap. vi.

mother of God. This was the forty-fourth year from the time that he was sent with Theodore by Pope Vitalian, and the thirty-ninth from the time that he came to Britain. Of whose learning, as also of that of Theodore, one testimony among others declares that Albinus¹, his disciple, who succeeded him in the government of the same monastery, was such a proficient in the study of classic writings², that he knew the Greek language indeed in no small measure, but the Latin as thoroughly as that of the Angles which is his native tongue.

Moreover, Acca³, his presbyter, undertook the episcopate of the church of Hagustald in the place of Wilfrid; being himself also a most zealous man and great in the sight of God and men, who also enlarged the edifice of that church of his which was consecrated in honour of the blessed apostle Andrew, with multifarious decoration and astonishing workmanship. For he gave diligence, as also he does this day, to collect from all quarters relics of the blessed apostles and martyrs of Christ, and to place altars to their honour in separate porches built for this same purpose, within the walls of the same church; and, besides, collecting the histories of their passion, together with other ecclesiastical books, with the greatest industry, he made there a most ample and noble library, and was also most diligent in procuring sacred vessels and lights, and other such like things which pertain

¹ This is he whom Bede, in his Preface, acknowledges as the chief promoter of his Ecclesiastical History. He died A.D. 732.

² See note to Chap. xviii.

³ Was abbot before he was bishop. Bede inscribes his Hexameron 'Accæ abbati.' His Commentary on Mark and Luke is also inscribed to Acca. He was banished from his bishopric, A.D. 732, and died Oct. 20, A.D. 740. Richard of Hexham, 14, 15.

to the adorning of the house of God. He also procured an excellent chanter, by name Maban, who had been thoroughly taught the notes of singing in Kent by the successors of the disciples of the blessed pope Gregory, for the instruction of himself and his people; and retained him twelve years¹, in order that he might both teach them the ecclesiastical chants which they did not know before, and that those which having been known formerly had by long use or negligence become incorrect, might be restored by his skill to their original state. For Bishop Acca himself was a most skilful chanter, as also most learned in sacred letters, and very correct in the confession of the catholic faith, and also well versed in rules of ecclesiastical institution: and he does not cease to be so, until he shall receive the rewards of pious devotion, as being one who from his boyhood was brought up and taught among the clergy of Boza², bishop of York, a man most holy and beloved by God. Afterwards coming to Bishop Wilfrid, in the hope of a better way of life, he spent the whole of the rest of his days in attendance upon him: with whom also going to Rome³, he learnt many useful things there respecting the appointments of the holy Church which he had been unable to learn in his own country.

¹ Much attention was paid to chanting; but it was not considered indispensable. In the Twelfth Canon of the Synod of Cloveshoe, A.D. 744, the following was decreed with reference to it, 'Qui vero id non est idoneus adsequi, pronunciantis modo simpliciter legendo, dicat atque recitet quicquid instantis temporis ratio poscit.' Wilkins i. p. 96.

² See Bk. IV. Chap. xii.

³ See Chap. xix.

CHAPTER XXI.

How Abbot Ceolfrid sent the king of the Picts architects for his church, and also a letter concerning the catholic manner of keeping Easter, and concerning the tonsure.

AT that time, Naiton, king of the Picts who inhabit the northern regions of Britain, being admonished by frequent study of ecclesiastical writings, renounced the error in which up to that time he and his people had been involved, concerning the keeping of Easter, and brought himself and all his people to observe the catholic time of the Lord's resurrection. In order that he might more easily and with greater authority accomplish this, he sought assistance from the nation of the Angles, who, he knew, had long since established their religion after the pattern of the holy Roman and apostolic Church. He therefore sent deputies to the venerable man Ceolfrid, abbot of the monastery¹ of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, which is at the mouth of the river Viuri, and near the river Tina, in a place which is called In Gyruum², over which he, after Benedict, of whom I have before spoken³, most gloriously presided, desiring that he would send him a letter of exhortation, by which he might more powerfully confute those who presumed to keep Easter at an

¹ 'Numero singulari, quia duo monasteria ab uno abbate regebantur, vel, sicut rectius dicere possumus, in duobus locis positum est unum monasterium.' (Smith.)

² Now Jarrow, in the county of Durham.

³ See Chap. xix., and Bk. IV. Chap. xviii.

improper time ; and also concerning the manner or method of tonsure by which it behoved clerics to be distinguished ; notwithstanding that he himself also was to no small extent acquainted with these things. Moreover, he requested that architects might be sent him, to build a church of stone in his nation, according to the fashion of the Romans¹, promising that it should be dedicated in honour of the blessed chief of the apostles ; also that he himself and all his people would always follow the custom of the holy Roman and apostolic Church, as far at least as they could learn it, who were so far removed from the language and nation of the Romans. And the most reverend abbot Ceolfrid, assenting to his religious vows and requests, sent him the architects that he asked for, and also a letter² written after this manner :—

‘ To the most excellent lord and glorious king Naiton, Ceolfrid, abbot, sends greeting in the Lord. We have made it our business to declare most promptly and willingly, at your desire, the catholic observance of the holy passover, according to what we have learnt of the apostolic see, which you, O king devoted to God, have, through your religious zeal, requested us to do. For we know that it is the gift of heaven to the Church that the lords of human affairs should pay attention to learning, teaching, and guarding the truth. For also a certain secular writer³ has most truly said, that the condition of the world would be most happy if either

¹ Cf. Bk. III. Chap. iii.

² Smith considers that Bede, who was living as a monk in Ceolfrid's monastery, assisted him in the composition of this epistle, which he, following Higden, supposes to have been written A.D. 710.

³ Plato, *de Republica*, v. 18.

kings were philosophers, or philosophers were kings. But if a man of this world could have a right perception concerning the philosophy of this world, and could make a correct observation concerning the state of this world, by how much more ought not the citizens of the heavenly kingdom, who are strangers and pilgrims in this world, to desire and implore with the whole strength of their minds that the more powerful any are in this world, the more they may endeavour to obey the commands of the Judge who is above all, and may instruct also those who are committed to them, both by their examples and authority, to observe these things together with themselves? There are, then, three rules laid down in the sacred Scriptures, by which the time of keeping the Passover is defined for us, and which it is not lawful for any human authority to change; two of which rules are divinely established in the Law of Moses; the third has been added in the Gospel, in consequence of the passion and resurrection of the Lord. For the Law has ordained that the passover should be kept in the first month of the year, and in the third week of the same month, that is, from the fifteenth day to the twenty-first. It is added from the Gospel, by apostolic institution, that we ought to wait, in that third week, for the Lord's day, and to hold on it the beginning of the paschal season. Which threefold rule, to wit, whoever rightly observes, will never err in his reckoning of the paschal feast. But if you desire to be more particularly and fully informed concerning each of these rules, it is written in Exodus, where the people of Israel, being about to be delivered out of Egypt, are commanded to hold the first passover, that the Lord said to Moses and

Aaron¹:—"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months, the first of the months of the year. Speak ye to all the assembly of the sons of Israel, and say to them, On the tenth day of this month, let each one take a lamb for every family and house." And a little after, "And ye shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month. And all the multitude of the sons of Israel shall sacrifice it at even²." From which words it is most clearly evident that mention is thus made of the fourteenth day in the paschal observance; not, however, that the passover is commanded to be kept on the fourteenth day itself, but that the lamb is commanded to be sacrificed at length on the coming of the evening of the fourteenth day, that is, when the fifteenth moon, which makes the beginning of the third week, comes forth on the face of heaven; and because that is the very night of the fifteenth moon, in which, the Egyptians being smitten, Israel was redeemed from a long servitude. "Seven days," He says, "ye shall eat unleavened bread." By which words also the whole of the third week of that first month is duly appointed a solemn feast. But lest we should think that

¹ Exodus xii. 1.

² According to the Hebrew, 'Between the two evenings.' ἀναμέσον τῶν ἑσπερινῶν, Septuagint. The Karaites and Samaritans were of opinion that this expression signified the time between sunset and late twilight. This opinion seems at first sight to be favoured by the words of Deut. xvi. 6, 'Thou shalt sacrifice the passover at evening, at the going down of the sun.' The Hebrew, however, may be rendered '*towards* the going down of the sun;' and the Septuagint has πρὸς δυσμὰς ἡλίου. The Pharisees and the Rabbinites considered the time when the sun began to descend to be called the first evening, and the second evening to be at sunset. The evening sacrifice was commanded to be offered at the same time. Ex. xxix. 39, 41; Numbers xxviii. 4.

the same seven days are to be reckoned from the fourteenth unto the twentieth, He immediately adds¹:—"On the first day there shall be no leaven in your houses. Whoever shall eat leavened bread from the first day unto the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel." And so on, unto where He says:—"For in that same day I will bring forth your army from the land of Egypt." He calls, then, that the first day of the feast of unleavened bread on which he was about to bring their host out of Egypt. Now it is evident that they were brought forth out of Egypt, not on the fourteenth day, in the evening of which the lamb was killed, and which is properly called the Pascha or Phase, but on the fifteenth day, as it is most plainly written in the Book of Numbers²: "The sons of Israel went out, therefore, from Rameses, with a high hand, on the fifteenth day of the first month, on the day after the Phase." It behoves, then, that the seven days of unleavened bread, on the first of which the people of the Lord were brought forth out of Egypt, should be computed from the beginning, as I said, of the third week, that is, from the fifteenth day of the first month unto the end of the twenty-first day of the same month. Further, the fourteenth day, besides this number of days, is separately designated by the title of "The Passover," as what follows in Exodus³ clearly teaches us, where, when it is said, "For in that same day I will bring forth your hosts from the land of Egypt," it is forthwith added, "And ye shall keep that day a solemnity for ever, all your generations." "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall eat unleavened bread,

¹ Exodus xii. 15.

² Numbers xxxiii. 3.

³ Exodus xii. 17.

unto the twenty-first day of the same month at evening. Seven days leavened bread shall not be found in your houses." Now who cannot perceive that from the fourteenth unto the twenty-first there are not seven days only, but rather eight days, if the fourteenth day itself also be reckoned in the number. But if, however, as the truth of Scripture, when more diligently investigated, teaches us, we make the reckoning from the evening of the fourteenth day unto the evening of the twenty-first, we shall assuredly see that the fourteenth day so extends its evening into the beginning of the paschal feast, that the whole of the sacred solemnity does not comprehend more than seven days only, and as many nights; whence also our definition is proved to be true, wherein I said that the paschal time is to be celebrated in the first month of the year, and in the third week of it. For, in truth, it is on the third week, inasmuch as it begins on the evening of the fourteenth day, and ends on the evening of the twenty-first. But after Christ our Passover was sacrificed, and made the Lord's Day, which is called by the ancients the day after, or the first day after, the Sabbath or Sabbaths, a festival for us, by reason of the joy of His resurrection, then apostolical tradition inserted this day in the paschal feasts; not, however, so as to decree that anything should interfere with or be taken from the time of the legal paschal feast. On the contrary, it decreed that the same first month of the year should be waited for, according to the precept of the Law; that the fourteenth day of it should be waited for, and that the evening of the same should be waited for. And when this day should happen to fall on a Sabbath, every one should take a lamb for his family and house, and

sacrifice it at evening ; that is, that all the Churches throughout the world, which make one universal Church, should provide bread and wine for the mystery of the flesh and blood of the Lamb without blemish that took away the sins of the world ; and that, after a suitable solemn service of lessons, prayers, and paschal ceremonies, they should offer these to the Lord, in the hope of their own future redemption. For that is the very same night in which the Israelitish people was delivered out of Egypt by the blood of the lamb ; that is the night in which all the people of God were delivered from eternal death by the resurrection of Christ. But on the shining of the morning of the Lord's day, they should celebrate the first day of the paschal feast ; for that is the day on which the Lord manifested the glory of His resurrection, with manifold joy of the benignant revelation, to His disciples. The same is the first day of unleavened bread, concerning which it is very distinctly written in Leviticus¹, "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at evening, is the Lord's passover ; and on the fifteenth day of this month is the Lord's solemnity of unleavened bread. Seven days ye shall eat unleavened bread. The first day shall be most observed and holy." If, then, it were possible for the Lord's Day always to fall on the fifteenth day of the first month, that is, on the fifteenth day of the moon, we might always celebrate the passover at one and the same time with the ancient people of God, as we do with one and the same faith, although the kind of mystery be different. But, inasmuch as the day of the week does not occur in the same order as the day of the moon, apostolical tradition, which was preached at Rome

¹ Lev. xxiii. 5.

by the blessed Peter, and confirmed at Alexandria by Mark the Evangelist, his interpreter, has decreed, that when the first month comes, on the approach of the evening of the fourteenth day in it, the Lord's Day should always be waited for, from the fifteenth unto the twenty-first day of the same month. For on whichever of these days it shall fall, on that day the passover will rightly be celebrated; because, forsooth, it belongs to the number of those seven days on which the feast of unleavened bread is commanded to be kept. So it happens that our paschal feast never deviates either way from the third week of the first month, but either occupies the whole of it, that is, all the seven days of the legal feast of unleavened bread, or, at least, some of them. For although it takes in but one of them, that is, the seventh day itself, which Scripture so highly commends above the rest, saying, "Moreover, the seventh day shall be more observed and holy; no servile work shall be done in it," none can lay to our charge that we do not rightly celebrate the Lord's day of the paschal feast, which we have received from the Gospel, on that day which the Law appointed, in the third week of the first month. The catholic method of this observance having been expounded, the unreasonable error is, on the other hand, manifest, of those who, without any necessity to compel them, presume either to forestall or overstep the limits prescribed in the Law. For without any reason or necessity, they forestall the time prescribed in the Law, who think that the Lord's day of the paschal feast is to be kept from the fourteenth unto the twentieth day of the moon of the first month. For when they begin to celebrate the vigils of the holy night from the evening of the thirteenth

day, it is clear that they put that day in the beginning of their paschal feast, of which they find no mention at all in the decree of the Law. And when they refuse to celebrate the Lord's paschal feast on the twenty-first day of the month, it is surely evident that they entirely exclude from their solemnity that day which the Law again and again commends to be observed as a greater festival than the rest ; and so, in a perverse order, sometimes even include the whole of the day of the paschal feast in the second week, and never assign it to the seventh day of the third week ; and again, those who think rather that the paschal feast is to be celebrated from the sixteenth to the twenty-second day of the aforesaid month, diverge, with no less an error, although on the other side, from the straight path of truth, and are like those who, avoiding shipwreck on Scylla, are engulfed in the whirlpool of Charybdis. For when they teach that the paschal feast is to be begun from the rising of the sixteenth moon of the first month, that is, from the evening of the fifteenth day, it must be evident that they entirely exclude from their solemnity the fourteenth day of the same month, which the Law chiefly and principally recommends ; so that they hardly touch upon the evening of the fifteenth day, on which the people of God was redeemed from the Egyptian bondage, and on which the Lord delivered the world from the darkness of its sins, by His own blood ; on which also being buried, He afforded us the hope of a blessed rest after death. And the same persons, bringing upon themselves the punishment of their error, when they place the Lord's day of the paschal feast on the twenty-second day of the month, undoubtedly violate, by an evident

transgression, the legitimate limits of the paschal feast, inasmuch as they begin the paschal feast from the evening of that day, on which the Law decreed that it should be completed and finished, and assign that day for the first of the paschal feast, of which no mention is found anywhere in the Law—that is, the first day of the fourth week. Both these parties are not only mistaken in their definition and computation of the age of the moon, but also sometimes in their finding the first month. This subject of dispute is more than this letter either can or ought to embrace. This only will I say, that it may always be unmistakably found by the vernal equinox¹, which month, according to computation by the moon, ought to be the first, and which the last of the year. Now the equinox, according to the judgment of all the Orientals, and especially of the Egyptians, who bear the palm for calculation before other teachers, is wont to arrive on the twelfth day of the Kalends of April², as we ourselves prove by horological observation. Whatever full moon there is, therefore, before the equinox, appearing on the fourteenth or fifteenth day, this belongs to the last month of the preceding year, and therefore is not suited for celebrating the paschal feast. But as to the day which has its full moon after the equinox, or on the very day of the equinox, we must know without any doubt, because it belongs to the first month, that on this day the ancients

¹ ‘On the month Xanthicus, which we call Nisan, and reckon upon as the beginning of the year; on the fourteenth of the moon, when the sun is in Aries, and that being the month when our forefathers came out of Egypt, the Law enjoins us to offer the same sacrifice every year over again, which our predecessors did at their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage, under the title of the Feast of the Passover.’ L’Estrange’s *Josephus*, *Jewish Antiq.* iii. 10.

² March 21.

were wont to celebrate the passover, and that we also should do so when the Lord's day has arrived. And this reason, forsooth, convinces us that we ought so to do, in that it is written in Genesis¹ that "God made two great luminaries; the greater luminary to rule the day, and the lesser luminary to rule the night;" or, as another reading gives it, "the greater luminary for the beginning of the day, and the lesser luminary for the beginning of the night." Just, then, as the sun, proceeding first from the middle of the east, marks the vernal equinox by his rising, and afterwards the moon, when the sun sets at evening, herself also follows with a full orb from the middle of the east; so the same first month of the moon must every year be kept in the same order, so that it ought to have its full moon not before the equinox, but either on the very day of the equinox, as was the case at first, or when that has passed. But if by a single day only the full moon precedes the time of the equinox, the above-mentioned reason proves that this day ought not to be assigned to the first month of the year commencing, but rather to the last month of the year ending; and therefore that it is unsuitable for the celebration of the paschal feast. But if it please you to hear also a mystical reason with regard to this, we are ordered to keep the paschal feast on the first month of the year, which is also called the month of new things, because we ought to celebrate the mysteries of the Lord's resurrection, and of our deliverance, with the spirit of our mind renewed to the love of heavenly things; and we are charged to do so in the third week of the same month, because Christ, who was promised both before the Law, and under the Law, Himself graciously came in the third age of the world, to

¹ Gen. i. 16.

be sacrificed as our passover ; and because rising again the third day from the dead, after His sufferings and death, He willed that this should be called the Lord's Day, and that we should every year celebrate on it the paschal feast of the same resurrection ; because also we alone truly celebrate His holy festival, when by faith, hope, and charity, we are careful to keep the Passover, that is, the passage from this world to the Father, with Him. We are commanded to observe the full moon of the first month after the vernal equinox—to wit, when the sun first makes the day longer than the night, and the moon afterwards presents the full orb of her light to the world ; because, indeed, “the Sun of Righteousness, with healing on His wings,” that is, the Lord Jesus, first overcame all the darkness of death by the triumph of His resurrection, and so ascending into the heavens, by sending the Spirit from above, filled His Church, which is often designated by the word “moon,” with the light of inward grace. Which order, to wit, of our salvation, the prophet had in mind, when he said, “The sun was exalted and the moon stood in her order¹.” He, therefore, who contends that the fulness of the paschal moon can take place before the equinox, is at variance, indeed, with the teaching of the holy Scriptures in his celebration of the greatest mysteries, but agrees with those who trust that they can be saved without the preventing grace of Christ ; because they presume to teach that they can have perfect righteousness, even although the true Light of the world ; by dying and rising again, had never vanquished the darkness of the world. Therefore, after the rising of the sun at the equinox,

¹ Hab. iii. 11 : ‘Sol et luna steterunt in habitaculo suo.’ Vulg.

after the full moon of the first month which follows this in order, that is, after the end of the fourteenth day of the same month, all which, we learn from the Law, are to be observed, we still, according to the teaching of the Gospel, wait for the time of the Lord's day in that third week, and so at length celebrate the votive feast of our passover, in order to show that we do not, with the ancients, respect the casting-off of the yoke of Egyptian bondage, but regard with devoted faith and love the redemption of the whole world, which, having been prefigured by the deliverance of God's ancient people, was completed by the resurrection of Christ; and also to testify that we rejoice in most sure hope of our own resurrection, which we believe will take place on the same Lord's day. Now this computation of the paschal feast which we show you is to be followed, is contained in a cycle of nineteen years; which, indeed, began long since, that is, in the very time of the apostles, to be observed in the Church, especially at Rome and in Egypt, as I have already said above. But by the industry of Eusebius¹, who has his surname from the blessed martyr Pamphilus, it was reduced to a plainer system, so that what until then used to be ordered by mandate of the patriarch of Alexandria throughout all the Churches every year, might thenceforth be very easily known by all, the series of the occurrences of the fourteenth moon

¹ Bede says this also in his book *De Temp. Rat.* 42, perhaps quoting Jerome de Vir. Ill. 61, and also, that Hippolytus had before composed a cycle of sixteen years. 'Paschalem cyclum Hippolytus episcopus temporibus Alexandri imperatoris conscripsit. Post quem probatissimi auctores, Eusebius Cæsariensis, Theophilus Alexandrinus, Prosper quoque natione Aquitanus, atque Victorinus, amplificatis ejusdem festivitatis rationibus, multiplices circulos ediderunt.' Isidorus Hispalensis Orig. vi. 17.

being comprehended in a regular table. This paschal calculation Theophilus, bishop of Alexandria, composed for the Emperor Theodosius, to embrace the period of a hundred years. Also Cyril, his successor, comprised a series of ninety-five years in five cycles of nineteen years; after whom, Dionysius Exiguus added as many more in like order, reaching down to our own time. These now approaching their termination, there is so great an abundance of calculators in the present day, that even in our churches throughout Britain, there are many who, having learned the ancient rules of the Egyptians, can very readily extend the paschal cycles for any number of years, even to 532 years, if they choose; at the expiration of which, all, as regards the coincidence of the sun and moon, month and week, returns in the same order as before. Therefore I forebore to send you those cycles of times to come, because you asked only to be instructed concerning the method of the paschal season, and declared that you had abundance of these catholic cycles for finding Easter.

‘But thus much having been succinctly and briefly said concerning Easter, according to your request, I also exhort you to take care to maintain that ecclesiastical tonsure¹, agreeable to the Christian faith, concerning which you also desired me to write to you. And, indeed, we know that not even the Apostles were all shorn in one and the same manner, and that the catholic Church now does not agree in one and the same mode of tonsure throughout all the world, in the same way as it consents in one faith, hope, and charity towards God. In short, to look back to former

¹ See Usher, *Primord.* p. 291.

times, that is, those of the patriarchs, Job, the exemplar of patience, when, while undergoing his severe tribulations, he shaved his head¹, made it appear that in the time of his prosperity he had been wont to let his hair grow. But Joseph, himself also a remarkable practiser and teacher of chastity, humility, piety, and the other virtues, is said to have been shorn² when he was to be released from servitude: it certainly appears that during the time of his servitude he remained in prison with his hair uncut. Behold how each of these men of God presented an appearance abroad different from the other; of whom, nevertheless, the conscience within agreed in a like grace of virtues. But, although I am free to confess that the difference of tonsure is not a source of harm to those who have a pure faith towards God, and sincere charity towards their neighbour—especially as we do not read that there was ever any controversy among the catholic fathers about the difference of tonsure, as there has been a conflict respecting the diversity in keeping Easter or of belief—yet, among all the modes of tonsure that are found, either in the Church, or among all the human race, I may justly say that none is more to be followed and adopted by us than that which he had on his head, to whom, on his confession of Him, the Lord said, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and to thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven³.” And I think that none deserves more to be abhorred and detested by all the faithful than that which he had, to whom, when he would have

¹ Job. i. 20.² Gen. xli. 14.³ Matt. xvi. 18, 19.

bought the grace of the Holy Spirit, the same Peter said, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou thoughtest that the gift of God could be purchased with money; thou hast no part nor lot in this word¹." But we are not shorn in the form of a crown only because Peter was so shorn; but, because Peter was so shorn in memory of the Lord's passion, for this reason we also, who desire to be saved by the same passion, do with him bear the sign of the same passion on the crown of our head, to wit, the highest part of our body. For just as all the Church, because it was made a Church by the death of the Giver of its life, is wont to bear the sign of the holy cross on the forehead, in order that it may be constantly defended, by the bulwark of this sign, from the attacks of malignant spirits; and that it may be taught by the constant admonition of the same that it ought to crucify its own flesh also with its vices and lusts: so also it behoves those to bear it, who having either taken the vow of a monk, or a degree among the clergy, are obliged, for the Lord's sake, to curb themselves with stricter reins of continence. It behoves also each of them to bear on his head, by the tonsure, the form of the crown, which Christ Himself in His passion bore made of thorns, that He might bear the thorns and briars of our sins, that is, that He might remove and take them from us; to the end that they may show by their outward appearance itself that they themselves also gladly and readily bear all manner of derision and reproach for His sake. Also, to the end that they may signify that they always look forward to the crown of eternal life, which the

¹ Acts viii. 20, 21.

Lord, on His part, hath promised to them that love Him, and that, for the sake of obtaining it, they contemn both the adversity and prosperity of this world. But as for that tonsure which they say Simon the sorcerer had, who, I ask, of the faithful is there who does not first of all detest it, together with sorcery itself, and who does not justly loathe the sight of it? Which tonsure, indeed, on the top of the forehead, seems to bear resemblance to a crown; but when, in regarding it, you come to the neck, you will find the crown which you thought you saw, cut short; so that you may know that such a fashion suits not Christians, but Simoniacal persons, who, indeed, in this present life were by deceived men thought worthy of the glory of an eternal crown, but in that life which follows this, are not only deprived of all hope of a crown, but are even condemned to eternal punishment. But do not think that I have so argued, as if I judged that those were condemned who have this tonsure, if they favour catholic unity by their faith and works: yea, I confidently profess my belief that very many of them are holy men, and approved of by God, of whom is Adamnan¹, the exemplary abbot and priest of Columba's monks; to whom, when he was sent as the ambassador of his nation to King Aldfrid, and was pleased to visit also our monastery, and showed admirable prudence, humility, and religion, in his behaviour and words, I said, among other things, when I talked with him, "I entreat you to tell me, holy brother, how it is that you, who believe that you are progressing towards the crown of that life which knows no end,

¹ See Chap. xv.

bear the likeness upon your head of a crown terminated in a fashion contrary to your belief? And if you seek the society of Peter, why do you copy the fashion of the tonsure of him whom Peter anathematized? and not rather even now show, as far as you can, that you love the habit of him with whom you desire to live in bliss eternally?" He answered: "Know, assuredly, my beloved brother, that, although I have the tonsure of Simon, according to the custom of my country, I yet detest and abhor, with my whole mind, the Simoniacal misbelief; and that I desire, as far as my littleness admits, to follow the steps of the most blessed chief of the apostles." Then I said, "I verily believe that it is so: but yet, if you have in outward show that which you know to be his, it is a proof that you embrace in your inmost heart that which is of the Apostle Peter. For I think that your wisdom must very readily discern, that it is much more proper to separate from your countenance already dedicated to God, that man's habit of countenance, whom you abominate with your whole heart, and of whose hideous face you would shun the sight; and, on the contrary, that in like manner it becomes you to copy the fashion of the habit of him whom you seek to have for your advocate with God, just as you desire to follow his actions and monitions." This I then said to Adamnan, who indeed showed how much advancement he made after seeing the appointments of our churches when, having returned to Scotland, he afterwards by his preaching brought great numbers of that nation over to the catholic observance of the paschal time; although he was not yet able to bring those monks who dwelt in the island of Hii, and over whom he presided with the special authority of ruler, to the way of

the better ordinance. He would also have been not unmindful to amend the tonsure, if his authority had been sufficient. Further, I now admonish your wisdom, O king, that you endeavour in all points to maintain those things which accord with the unity of the catholic and apostolic Church, together with that nation over which the King of kings and Lord of lords has set you. For thus it will come to pass that after the sway of the temporal kingdom which you have received, the most blessed chief of the apostles will himself readily open to you and yours, together with the rest of the elect, an entrance into the heavenly kingdom. The grace of the eternal King grant thee long to reign, and keep thee in safety for the peace of us all, my most beloved son in Christ.'

When this letter had been read in the presence of King Naiton, and of many learned men, and had been carefully translated into his own language by those who could understand it, he is said to have greatly rejoiced at the exhortation contained in it; insomuch that rising up in the midst of his great men who sat there, he knelt upon the ground, giving thanks to God that he had been found worthy to receive such a present from the land of the Angles. 'I knew, indeed, before,' said he, 'that this was the true celebration of the paschal feast, but now I so fully know the reason for observing this time, that I seem to myself to have understood very little about it before. Wherefore I openly declare, and testify to you who are now sitting here, that I will ever observe this time of the paschal feast, with the whole of my nation; and I decree that all the clerics who are in my kingdom shall receive this tonsure for which we hear such ex-

cellent reason.' Without loss of time, he accomplished by his royal authority what he had said. For presently, by a public order, the nineteen-year cycles of the paschal feast were sent to be transcribed, learnt, and observed throughout all the provinces of the Picts, the erroneous cycles of eighty-four years being everywhere suppressed. All the ministers of the altar and the monks were shorn after the fashion of the crown, and the nation thus reformed rejoiced that it was subjected as though to the new direction of Peter, the most blessed chief of the apostles, and that it was to be protected by his patronage.

CHAPTER XXII.

How the monks of Hii¹, with the monasteries subject to them, began to celebrate the canonical paschal feast, at the preaching of Ecgberct.

NOT long after, those monks also of the Scottish nation, who lived in the isle of Hii, with the monasteries that were subject to them, were, by the Lord's furtherance, brought² to the canonical mode of keeping the paschal feast, and of the tonsure. For in the year from the Lord's incarnation 716,

¹ See Chap. xv. and Bk. III. Chap. iv.

² The Annals of Ulster, as quoted by Usher, Primord. p. 702, state that this took place on Saturday, August 29, the feast of the decollation of St. John the Baptist.

in which, Osred¹ being slain, Cœnred² took upon him the government of the kingdom of the Northumbrians, when the father and priest beloved of God, Ecgberct, who is to be named with all honour, and of whom I have frequently made mention above³, had come to them from Ireland, he was honourably and with much gladness received by them. And because he was a most delightful teacher, and a most devoted practiser of those things which he taught were to be done, being willingly heard by all⁴, he, by his pious and assiduous exhortations, changed that inveterate tradition of their forefathers, in regard to whom we may quote that saying of the apostle⁵, that 'they had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge : ' and taught them how to keep the principal solemnity after the catholic and apostolic custom, as I have said, under the figure of a perpetual circle. This, it is evident, was accomplished by a wonderful dispensation of Divine goodness, to the end that this nation which had been careful willingly and ungrudgingly to communicate to the peoples of the Angles⁶ the science of the knowledge of God which it knew, should itself also afterwards, by means of the nation of the Angles, attain to a perfect rule of living, in regard to those

¹ He succeeded Aldfrid in A.D. 705, Chap. xviii. Matt. West. ad a. 717, 'Osredus rex Northanhumbroꝝ juxta mare pugnans, belli infortunio interemptus est.' The Saxon Chronicle puts his death in A.D. 716.

² Malms. Reg. i. 3, says of him and his successor Osric : 'hoc tantum memorabile habuerunt, quod domini sui, licet merito ut putabant occisi, sanguinem luentes fædo exitu auras polluere.'

³ See Chaps. ix. x; and Bk. III. Chaps. iv. xxvii.

⁴ The Annals of Ulster, however, state that in A.D. 717, the monks of Iona were expelled beyond Drumalbin, by King Nectan, the Naiton of the text.

⁵ Rom. x. 2.

⁶ Cf. Bk. III. Chap. iii.

things in which it was deficient. Even as, on the contrary, the Britons, who would not impart to the Angles that knowledge of the Christian faith which they had, now, when the peoples of the Angles believe and are thoroughly instructed in the rule of the catholic faith, themselves being still inveterate and rendered lame by their own by-paths, both exhibit their heads without the crown, and venerate the solemn rites of Christ without the fellowship of Christ's Church.

Moreover, the monks of Hii adopted, by the teaching of Ecgberct, the catholic rules of living, under the abbot Duunchad¹, after about eighty years from the time that they sent² Bishop Aidan to preach to the nation of the Angles. Moreover, the man of God, Ecgberct, remained thirteen years in the aforesaid island, which he had consecrated to Christ as though by a new illumination of the grace of ecclesiastical fellowship and peace; and in the year of the Lord's incarnation 729, in which the Lord's paschal feast was kept on the eight day of the Kalends of May³, when he had celebrated the solemnity of the mass in memory of the same resurrection of the Lord, himself also on the same day departed to the Lord, and finished, or rather never ceases to celebrate, with the Lord, and the apostles, and the other citizens of heaven, the rejoicing of the chief festival which he had begun with the brethren whom he had converted to the grace of unity. Now, it was a wonderful dispensation of Divine providence, that the venerable man passed from this world to the Father, not only during the paschal feast, but even when Easter was celebrated on that day on which it

¹ He died in A.D. 717. Usher, p. 541.

² Cf. Bk. III. Chaps. iii. v.

³ April 24.

had never before been wont to be celebrated in those parts. The brethren, then, rejoiced in the certain and catholic knowledge of the paschal time; they were glad to have the advocacy of the father, departed to the Lord, by whom they had been converted. He also congratulated himself on his having been so long kept in the flesh, until he saw his hearers adopt and celebrate with him that day for the paschal feast which they had always before avoided. And so the most reverend father, being assured of their correction, exulted when he saw the day of the Lord. He saw it and was glad.

CHAPTER XXIII.

What the state of the nation of the Angles, or of all Britain, is at present.

IN the year of the Lord's incarnation 725, which was the seventh of Osric¹, king of the Northumbrians, who had succeeded Cœnred, Victred², the son of Ecgberct, king of the Cantuarii, died on the ninth day of the Kalends of May³, and left three sons⁴, Ædilberct, Eadberct, and Alric, the heirs of

¹ Son of Alchfrid; reigned from A.D. 718 till May 9, A.D. 729.

² See Bk. IV. Chap. xxvi.

³ April 23.

⁴ Quorum Eadberct 23, Ædilberct 11, Alric 34 annis paterna tenentes instituta haud decolore exitu regnum contaminaverunt (continuaverunt), nisi quod Ædilberct fortuito urbis incendio, et Alric infausto adversus Mercios proelio gloriam temporum suorum non parum obnubilaverunt.' Malms. de Reg. i. 1.

his kingdom, which he had governed thirty-four years and a half. The next year after, died Tobias, bishop of the church of Rochester, a most learned man, as I have said above¹. For he was a disciple of those masters of blessed memory, Archbishop Theodore, and Abbot Hadrian, whence, as I have said, together with his erudition in ecclesiastical and general literature, he had so well learnt the Greek and Latin tongues, that they were as well known and familiar to him as his native language. He was buried in the porch of St. Paul the apostle, which he had built within the church of St. Andrew² for his own place of burial. After him Aldwulf³, having been consecrated by Archbishop Berctwald, undertook the office of the episcopate.

In the year of the Lord's incarnation 729, two comets appeared about the sun, causing great terror to the beholders. One of them went before the rising sun in the morning; the other followed the setting sun in the evening, as though presaging dire calamity both to the east and to the west: or, at all events, one was the forerunner of the day, the other of the night, to signify that at either time evils impended on mortals. Moreover, they carried their trains of fire towards the north, as if with the intent of kindling a conflagration. They appeared in the month of January, and remained for about two weeks; at which time a most grievous plague of Saracens devastated Gaul with miserable slaughter, but

¹ See Chap. viii.

² Built by Ædilberct II.; restored by Archbishop Lanfranc, and dedicated May 5, A.D. 1130, by Archbishop William.

³ The Saxon Chronicle states that Dun succeeded him as Bishop of Rochester A.D. 741.

not long after¹ they paid, in the same province, the penalty due to their perfidy. In which year, the holy man of the Lord, Ecgberct, as I have said above, departed to the Lord, on the very day of the paschal feast; and presently, when the feast was ended, that is, on the seventh day of the Ides of May², Osric, king of the Northumbrians, departed this life³, having appointed Ceolwulf⁴ the brother of that king Cœnred who had reigned before him to be his successor in the government which he himself had held eleven years; the beginning and progress of whose reign have been full of so many and so great commotions of conflicting events, that it cannot as yet be known what should be written concerning them, or what end they will severally have.

In the year of the Lord's incarnation 731⁵, Archbishop

¹ Charles Martel obtained a great victory over the Saracens at Tours, October, A.D. 732. Bede may have added this passage subsequently to the completion of his History.

² May 13.

³ Was slain A.D. 731. Saxon Chronicle.

⁴ To this king Bede's History is inscribed. Concerning him, see continuation, ad a. 731. In A.D. 737 he became a monk of Lindisfarne, where he lived till A.D. 760. Sim. Dun. p. 9. 'Kelwulf, in Northumberland, three years after became monk in Lindisfarne, yet none of the severest, for he brought those monks from milk and water to wine and ale, in which doctrine no doubt but that they were soon docile; and well might, for Kelwulf brought with him good provision, great treasure, and revenues of land, recited by Simeon [of Durham], yet all, under pretence of following (I use the author's words) "poor Christ," by voluntary poverty: no marvel then if such applause were given by monkish writers to kings turning monks, and much cunning perhaps used to allure them.' Milton. Hist. of England, Bk. iv.

⁵ 'Thus representing the state of things in this island, Bede surceased to write. Of whom chiefly hath been gathered, since the Saxons' arrival, such as hath been delivered, a scattered story picked out here and there, with some trouble and tedious work from among his many legends of visions and

Berctwald¹, being worn out by great age, died on the day of the Ides of January², having filled the see thirty years, six months, and fourteen days; in whose place, that same year, an archbishop was appointed, by name Tatwine³, of the province of the Mercians, who had been a presbyter in the monastery that is called Briudun⁴. Moreover, he was consecrated in the city of Canterbury by those venerable men, Danihel, bishop of Winchester, Ingwald⁵, of London, Aldwin, of Lichfield, and Aldwulf, of Rochester, on Sunday, the tenth day of the month of June, being a man remarkable for religion and prudence, and notably learned in sacred literature.

Thus, at present, the bishops Tatwine and Aldwulf preside over the Churches of the Kentish people: furthermore,

miracles; toward the latter end so bare of civil matters, as what can be thence collected may seem a calendar rather than a history taken up for the most part with succession of kings, and computation of years, yet those hard to reconcile with the Saxon annals. Their actions we read of were most commonly wars, but for what cause waged, or by what counsels carried on, no care was had to let us know: whereby their strength and violence we understand, of their wisdom, reason, or justice, little or nothing; the rest superstition and monastical affectation. Kings one after another leaving their kingly charge to run their heads fondly into a monk's cowl; which leaves us uncertain, whether Beda was wanting to his matter, or his matter to him. Yet from hence to the Danish invasion it will be worse with us, destitute of Beda.' Milton, *Hist. of England*, Bk. iv.

¹ See Chap. viii.

² Jan. 13. The short Chronicle of Rochester says that he died on the 6 Id. Jan., or Jan. 8.

³ Died July 30, A.D. 734.

⁴ A monastery near Bredon Hill, in Worcestershire, founded by Eanulf, the grandsire of Offa of Mercia.

⁵ He died A.D. 745.

Ingwald over the province of the East Saxons ; Bishops Aldberct¹ and Hadulac² over the province of the East Angles ; Bishops Danihel and Forthere over the province of the West Saxons ; Bishop Aldwine³ over the province of the Mercians ; and Bishop Walchstod⁴ over those peoples that dwell towards the west, beyond the river Severn ; Bishop Wilfrid⁵ over the province of the Huiccii. Bishop Cyniberct⁶ presides over the province of the Lindisfari. The episcopate of the Isle of Wight⁷ belongs to Danihel, bishop of the city of Winchester. The province of the South Saxons, having now continued some years without a bishop, receives its episcopal ministrations from the bishop of the West Saxons. And all these provinces and the other southern ones, as far as the boundary of the river Humber, are each with their kings subject to Ædilbald⁸, king of the Mercians. But four bishops hold the prelature of the province of the Northumbrians, which king Ceolwulf rules ; Wilfrid⁹ in the church of York, Edilwald¹⁰ in that of the Lindisfaronenses¹¹, Acca¹² in that of Hugustald, Pecthelm¹³ in that which is called Candida Casa, which, the numbers of the faithful having lately increased, is now advanced to a pontifical see, and has him

¹ Bishop of Dunwich.

² Bishop of Elmham.

³ Also called Wor. He succeeded, A.D. 721, and died, A.D. 737. William of Malmesbury states that the diocese of Lichfield was, after his death, divided into those of Lichfield, Leicester, and Dorchester. *Gest. Pont.* iv. p. 288.

⁴ Bishop of Hereford.

⁵ Succeeded Ecgwine A.D. 717.

⁶ Died A.D. 732. *Sim. Dun.* p. 99.

⁷ See Bk. IV. Chap. xvi.

⁸ He reigned from A.D. 716 to A.D. 757.

⁹ Wilfrid II ; was bishop till A.D. 745.

¹⁰ Died A.D. 740.

¹¹ Or Lindisfari.

¹² See Chap. xx.

¹³ He died A.D. 735. Florence.

for its first prelate¹. The nation of the Picts also, at this time, have a treaty of peace with the nation of the Angles, and they rejoice to be partakers of catholic peace and truth with the universal Church. The Scots who dwell in Britain are contented with their own territories, and have no hostile nor crafty designs against the nation of the Angles. The Britons, although they, for the most part, through their cherished hatred, are hostile to the nation of the Angles, and wrongfully, and from evil customs, oppose the appointed paschal feast of the whole catholic Church, yet, both Divine and human power withstanding them, can in neither respect obtain the object of their desire; since, forsooth, although part of them are independent, a considerable part have been brought under subjection to the Angles. Favoured by this peace and serenity of the times, many in the nation of the Northumbrians, nobles as well as private persons, having laid aside their weapons, are more intent on receiving the tonsure, and binding themselves and their children by monastic vows, than on the exercise of warlike arts. What results this state of things will have, posterity will see. This is the state of the whole of Britain at present in the two hundred and eighty-fifth year of the coming of the Angles into Britain, and in the year of the Lord's incarnation 731; in whose perpetual reign may the earth rejoice, and, Britain rejoicing with them in His faith, may many isles be glad, and give thanks in remembrance of His holiness.

¹ Nynias was really its first bishop. Bk. III. Chap. iv.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Chronological recapitulation of the whole work ; and concerning the person of the author.

I HAVE thought fit to recapitulate those things which have been related at large with a particular mention of their dates, for the preserving of the memory of them.

In the year, then, before the Lord's incarnation 60¹, Gaius Julius Cæsar, first of the Romans, defeated Britain in war, but yet could not gain the kingdom there.

In the year from the Lord's incarnation 46², Claudius, the second of the Romans that came to Britain, received a great part of the island on terms of surrender, and added also the Orkney isles to the Roman empire.

In the year of the Lord's incarnation 167, Eleuther, being made bishop of Rome, governed the Church most gloriously fifteen years ; to whom Lucius, king of Britain, sent a letter, desiring that he might be made a Christian, and obtained his request.

In the year from the Lord's incarnation 189³, Severus being made emperor, reigned seventeen years ; who also girt Britain with a wall from sea to sea.

In the year 381⁴, Maximus being made emperor in Britain, passed over into Gaul, and slew Gratianus.

¹ B.C. 55. See Bk. I. Chap. ii.

³ A.D. 193, Eusebius.

² A.D. 43 (Moberly).

⁴ A.D. 378 (Moberly).

In the year 409¹, Rome was crushed by the Goths, from which time the Romans ceased to reign in Britain.

In the year 430, Palladius was sent to the Scots that believed in Christ, by Pope Celestine, to be their first bishop.

In the year 449², Marcianus undertook the government with Valentinian, and held it seven years: in whose time the Angles, being invited by the Britons, came to Britain.

In the year 538, an eclipse of the sun took place, on the fourteenth day before the Kalends of March³, from the first hour until the third.

In the year 540, an eclipse of the sun took place on the twelfth day before the Kalends of July⁴, and the stars appeared for nearly half an hour after the third hour of the day.

In the year 547, Ida began to reign, from whom the royal family of the Northumbrians has its origin, and continued to reign twelve years.

In the year 565, Columba, a Scottish presbyter, came to Britain to instruct the Picts, and built a monastery in the isle of Hii.

In the year 596, Pope Gregory sent Augustine with monks to Britain, to preach the glad tidings of the Word of God to the nation of the Angles.

In the year 597, the aforesaid teachers arrived in Britain, which was about the one hundred and fiftieth year of the coming of the Angles into Britain.

In the year 601, Pope Gregory sent a pall to Britain for Augustine, who had now been made bishop, and more ministers of the Word, among whom was Paulinus.

¹ A.D. 310 (Moberly).

³ Feb. 16.

² A.D. 450 (Moberly).

⁴ June 20.

In the year 603, a battle was fought at Degrastane.

In the year 604, the East Saxons received the faith of Christ, under King Sæberct, at the preaching of Bishop Mellitus.

In the year 605, Gregory died¹.

In the year 616, Ædilberct, king of Kent, died.

In the year 625, Paulinus was ordained bishop of the Northumbrians, by Archbishop Justus.

In the year 626, Eanfled, the daughter of King Ædwin, was baptized, with twelve others, on the Saturday of the Pentecost.

In the year 627, King Ædwin was baptized, with his nation, at Easter.

In the year 633, King Ædwin being slain, Paulinus returned to Kent.

In the year 640, Eadbald, king of Kent, died.

In the year 642, King Oswald was killed.

In the year 644, Paulinus, formerly bishop of York, but then bishop of the city of Rochester, departed to the Lord.

In the year 651, King Oswin was killed, and Bishop Aidan died.

In the year 653, the Midland Angles were initiated in the mysteries of the faith, under Prince Peada.

In the year 655, Penda was slain, and the Mercians became Christians.

In the year 664, an eclipse took place; Earconberct, king of Kent, died; and Colman, with his followers, returned to the Scots; a pestilence came; and Ceadda and Wilfrid were ordained bishops of the Northumbrians.

¹ A.D. 604 (Moberly).

In the year 668, Theodore was ordained bishop.

In the year 670, Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, died.

In the year 673, Ecgberct, king of Kent, died; and a most profitable synod was held at Hertford, King Ecgfrid being present, Archbishop Theodore presiding; the decrees of which consisted of ten Articles.

In the year 675, Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, after he had reigned seventeen years, died, and left the government to his brother Ædilred.

In the year 676, Ædilred ravaged Kent.

In the year 678, a comet appeared; Bishop Wilfrid was driven from his see by King Ecgfrid; and, in his place, Bosa, Eata, and Eadhæth were consecrated bishops.

In the year 679, Ælfwine was killed.

In the year 680, a synod was held in the plain of Hæthfelth, concerning the catholic faith, Archbishop Theodore presiding, at which John, the Roman abbot, was present. In this year the abbess Hild died at Streanæshalch.

In the year 685, Ecgfrid, king of the Northumbrians, was killed. In the same year, Hlothere, king of Kent, died.

In the year 688, Cædwald¹, king of the West Saxons, went from Britain to Rome.

In the year 690, Archbishop Theodore died.

In the year 697, Queen Osthryd was killed by her own people, that is, the Mercian nobles.

In the year 698, Berctred, the king's general of the Northumbrians, was slain by the Picts.

In the year 704, Ædilred, after he had ruled the nation of

¹ Cædwalla.

the Mercians thirty-one years, became a monk, and resigned his kingdom to Cœnred.

In the year 705, Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, died.

In the year 709, Cœnred, king of the Mercians, after he had reigned five years, went to Rome.

In the year 711, Berctfrid, the prefect, fought with the Picts.

In the year 716, Osred, king of the Northumbrians, was killed, and Ceolred, king of the Mercians, died; and Ecgberct, the man of God, brought the monks of Hii to adopt the catholic Easter and the ecclesiastical tonsure.

In the year 725, Victred, king of Kent, died.

In the year 729, comets appeared; the holy Ecgberct departed; Osric died.

In the year 731, Archbishop Berctwald died. In the same year Tatwine was consecrated ninth archbishop of the Church of Canterbury, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Ædilbald, king of the Mercians.

These things concerning the Ecclesiastical History of Britain, and chiefly of the nation of the Angles, I, Bede, the servant of Christ, and presbyter of the monastery of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, which is at Viuræmuda¹ and Ingyruum², have, with the Lord's help, set in order, according as I could learn either from the writings of the ancients, or from the tradition of our forefathers, or by my own knowledge.

I was born on the land of the same monastery, and when I was seven years of age, I was entrusted by my relatives to the most reverend abbot Benedict, to be brought up, and

¹ Wearmouth.

² Jarrow.

afterwards to Ceolfrid; and dwelling all the succeeding time of my life under the roof of the same monastery, I gave all my attention to the study of the Scriptures; and, while observing the regular discipline, and the daily charge of singing in the church, I always took delight in learning, teaching, and writing.

Moreover, in the nineteenth year of my age, I received the diaconate, and in my thirtieth year the degree of the priesthood; each by the ministry of the most reverend bishop John, by the order of Abbot Ceolfrid.

From the time that I received the degree of priest's orders unto the fifty-ninth year of my age, I have been occupied in making the following brief annotations on Holy Scripture, for my own and my scholars' use, out of the works of the venerable fathers, or even in making some additions to the form of the meaning and interpretation given by them.

On the first part of Genesis, as far as the birth of Isaac, and the ejection of Ismael, three books.

On the Tabernacle, and its vessels, and vestments of the priests, three books.

On the first part of Samuel, that is, to the death of Saul, three books.

On the building of the Temple, of allegorical exposition and other matters connected with it, two books.

Also a book of thirty questions on the Book of Kings.

On the Proverbs of Solomon, three books.

On the Song of Songs, seven books.

On Isaiah, Daniel, the twelve Prophets, and part of Jeremiah, distinctions of chapters, extracted from St. Jerome's treatise.

On Ezra and Nehemiah, three books.

On the Song of Habakkuk, one book.

On the book of the blessed father Tobias, of explanation of its allegory, concerning Christ and the Church, one book.

Also, chapters of Lectures on the Pentateuch of Moses, Joshua, and Judges.

On the Books of Kings and Chronicles.

On the Book of the blessed father Job.

On Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs.

On the Prophet Isaiah, also Ezra, and Nehemiah.

On the Gospel of Mark, four books.

On the Gospel of Luke, six books.

Of Homilies on the Gospel, two books.

Whatever expositions of the apostle I have found in the works of St. Augustine, I have taken care to transcribe in order.

On the Acts of the Apostles, two books.

On the Seven Catholic Epistles, a book each.

On the Revelation of St. John, three books.

Also, chapters of Lectures on the whole of the New Testament, except the Gospels.

Also, a book of Letters to various persons : of which one is concerning the six ages of the world; one concerning the sojournings of the children of Israel; one concerning that saying of Isaiah, ' And they shall be shut up there in prison, and shall be visited after many days;' one concerning the method of leap year; one concerning the equinox, according to Anatolius. .

Also concerning the histories of the saints, I have translated the book of the Life and Passion of St. Felix

the Confessor into prose, from the metrical work of Paulinus.

I have corrected, according to the sense, as well as I was able, the book of the Life and Passion of St. Anastasius, which had been badly translated from the Greek¹, and worse amended by some unskilful person.

I have described the life of the holy father, both monk and bishop, Cudberct, first in heroic metre, and afterwards in plain prose.

The history of the abbots of this monastery, in which I delight to serve the Supreme Goodness, Benedict, Ceolfrid, and Huætberct, in two books.

The Ecclesiastical History of our island and nation, in five books.

A Martyrology, concerning the birthdays of holy martyrs; in which I have diligently taken care to note down all whom I could discover, and not only on what day, but also by what kind of conflict, and under what judge, they overcame the world.

A Book of Hymns, in different metres or rhythm.

A Book of Epigrams in heroic, or elegiac, metre.

Concerning the Nature of Things, and Concerning Times, a book each.

Also, Concerning Times, one larger book.

A book concerning Orthography, arranged in alphabetical order.

Also, a book concerning the Metrical Art; and in addition to this another small book, concerning Figures or Tropes,

¹ This shows that Bede was acquainted with Greek.

that is, concerning the figures or modes of speech, which are to be found in Holy Scripture.

And I beseech Thee, good Jesu, mercifully to grant that he, to whom Thou hast propitiously given sweetly to imbibe the words of Thy knowledge, may also, at some future time, come to Thee, the fountain of all wisdom, and always appear before Thy face.

Here ends, with the Lord's help, the Fifth Book of the Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation.

In the year 731, King Ceolwulf was taken captive, and shorn, and sent back to his kingdom. Bishop Acca was driven from his see.

In the year 732, Ecgberct¹ was made bishop in the place of Wilfrid.

In the year 733, an eclipse of the sun took place on the nineteenth day before the Kalends of September², about the third hour of the day; so that nearly the whole disc of the sun appeared as though it were covered with a very black and horrid shield.

In the year 734, the moon was overspread with a blood-red colour, as it were for the whole of the second hour of the day of the Kalends of February, about cock-crowing, and with a blackness following afterwards, and then regained its usual brightness³. In the same year Bishop Tatwine died.

¹ Archbishop of York, to whom Bede wrote an Epistle.

² Aug. 14.

³ Here the Moore MS. and all the best of the others, end. As Bede died in A.D. 735, what follows has been added by another hand.

In the year 735¹, Nothelm was ordained archbishop ; and Bishop Ecgberct, having received a pall from the apostolic see, was confirmed in the archiepiscopate, the first after Paulinus ; and ordained Fruidbert and Fruidwald bishops ; and the presbyter Bede died.

In the year 737, a great drought made the land unfruitful ; and Ceolwulf, voluntarily taking the tonsure, left his kingdom to Eadberct.

In the year 739², Edilhart, king of the West Saxons, died, and Archbishop Nothelm.

In the year 740³, Cudberct was consecrated in the place of Nothelm. Ædilbald⁴, king of the Mercians, with inhuman fraud, laid waste part of Northumbria ; and Eadberct its king was occupied with his army against the Picts. Also Bishop Ædilwald died, and Conwulf was ordained bishop in his place. Aruwine and Eadberct⁵ were killed.

In the year 741, a great drought befell the land. Charles, king of the Franks, died ; and his sons Carloman and Pippin received the kingdom in his stead.

In the year 745, Bishop Wilfrid⁶, and Ingwald, bishop of London, departed to the Lord.

In the year 747, Herefrid, the man of God, died.

In the year 750, Cudret⁷, king of the West Saxons, rose

¹ A.D. 736, Sax. Chron.

² A.D. 741, Sax. Chron.

³ A.D. 741, Sax. Chron.

⁴ A.D. 737, Sax. Chron.

⁵ Eadberct, king of Northumbria, did not die this year, for mention is twice made of him subsequently in this Continuation (A.D. 750, 758). Simeon of Durham says, ' Arwine filius Eadulfi occisus est,' in this year, but makes no mention of Eadberct.

⁶ Perhaps bishop of the Huiccii. (Smith.) April 29, A.D. 744. Sax. Chron. See Chap. xxiii.

⁷ Cudred. A.D. 752, Sax. Chron.

up against King Ædilbald, and Ængus. Theneorus and Eanfrid died. Eadberct added the plain of Cyil¹, with other districts, to his kingdom.

In the year 756, the fifth year of the reign of Eadberct, on the Ides of January, an eclipse of the sun took place². Afterwards, in the same year and month, that is, on the ninth day of the Kalends of February³, the moon was eclipsed⁴ by a dreadful and very black shield. Boniface⁵, who is also called Winfrid, a bishop of the Franks, was crowned with martyrdom, together with fifty-three others; and Redger was consecrated archbishop in his place, by Pope Stephen.

In the year 757⁶, Ædilbald, king of the Mercians, died, being deceitfully and cruelly put to death at night by his guardians. Beonred began to reign; Cymwulf⁷, king of the West Saxons, died. Also, in the same year, Offa expelled Beonred, and acquired the kingdom of the Mercians by the blood-stained sword.

In the year 758⁸, Eadberct, king of the Northumbrians, on account of his love of God, and violent longing for the heavenly kingdom, received the tonsure of St. Peter, and left his kingdom to his son Oswulf.

In the year 759⁹, Oswulf was wickedly slain by his attendants; and Ædilwald, being elected the same year by

¹ Kyle, a district of Ayrshire.

² There was no eclipse of this date. Hussey's emendation of this passage is 'Anno 753, anno regni Eadbercti decimo quinto, quinto Id. Jan.'

³ Jan. 24.

⁴ There was no eclipse of the moon of this date, but there was on Jan. 24, A.D. 753. (Hussey.)

⁵ A.D. 755, 'nonis Junii.' Florence.

⁶ A.D. 755, Sax. Chron.

⁷ Cynewulf, Sax. Chron.

⁸ A.D. 757, Sax. Chron.

⁹ A.D. 758, Sax. Chron.

his people, took the government ; in whose second year a great tribulation of mortality came, and continued nearly two years, severe and various diseases making havoc, but chiefly a dysenteric sickness.

In the year 761, Ængus, king of the Picts, died, a tyrannical butcher, who continued from the beginning to the end of his reign in a course of bloodshed and wickedness ; and Oswin was killed.

In the year 765, King Alucred was admitted to the government.

In the year 766, Archbishop Ecgberct, who had been enriched by the royal family, and well instructed in Divine knowledge, and Erithubert, two truly faithful bishops, departed to the Lord.



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